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JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK

A Tragedy in Three Acts

BY
SEAN O'CASEY

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JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK

Produced at the Royalty Theatre, London, on November 16th, 1925, with the following cast of characters :

"CAPTAIN " JACK BOYLE	} their Children	Residents in the Tenement	}	Arthur Sinclair.
JUNO BOYLE, his Wife				Sara Allgood.
JOHNNY BOYLE				Harry Hutchinson.
MARY BOYLE				Kathleen O'Regan.
"JOKER " DALY				Sydney Morgun.
MRS. MAISIE MADIGAN				Marie O'Neill.
"NEEDLE " NUGENT a Tailor				J. A. O'Rourke.
MRS. TANCRED				Kitty Kirwan.
JERRY DEVINE				David Morris.
CHARLIE BENTHAM, a School Teacher				Eric Page.
AN IRREGULAR MOBILIZER				Barney Mulligan.
TWO IRREGULARS			(one)	E. T. Kennedy.
A COAL-BLOCK VENDOR				Edmund O'Grady.
A SEWING MACHINE MAN				Christopher Steele.
TWO FURNITURE-REMOVAL MEN			(one)	Edmund O'Grady.
TWO NEIGHBOURS				Joyce Chancellor.
				Mollie Mackan.

SCENE

ACT I.—The living apartment of a two-roomed tenancy of the Boyle family, in a tenement house in Dublin.

ACT II.—The same.

ACT III.—The same.

A few days elapse between Acts I and II, and two months between Acts II and III.

During Act III the curtain is lowered for a few minutes to denote the lapse of one hour.

Period of the play, 1922.

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JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK

ACT I

SCENE.—*Living apartment of a two-room tenancy occupied by the BOYLE family, in a tenement house in Dublin. On the R., a door leading to the street. Above door R., a window looking into street. On C. back wall is a window. To R. of window, a dresser with crockery; to L. of window, a curtained alcove containing bed. On L. wall upstage is a door leading to another room. Below this door is the fireplace. On mantelpiece is an alarm clock, lying on its face. On wall, over mantelpiece, a picture of the Blessed Virgin; beneath picture on mantelpiece a small red bowl; the bowl is filled with oil, and in the oil a lighted wick floats. This votive light must be always plainly visible. In C. of room is a kitchen table, with chairs, one at back, and one at each end of table. On table a small mirror, a newspaper spread out at one end, and breakfast things at the other end. A well-worn armchair beside fireplace. A pan in the fender and a teapot on the hob. A long-handled labourer's shovel is leaning against the side of the dresser.*

When the CURTAIN rises, JOHNNY BOYLE is sitting crouched in the armchair beside the fire. He is a thin, delicate fellow, younger than MARY; his face is pale and drawn; there is a tremulous look of indefinite fear in his eyes. The left sleeve of his coat is empty. When he walks he has a slight halt.

MARY with her jumper off—it is lying on the back of a chair—is arranging her hair before a tiny mirror perched on the table. Beside the mirror is stretched out the morning paper which she looks at when she isn't gazing into the mirror. She is a well-made and good-looking girl of 22. Two forces are working in her mind—one, through the circumstances of her life, pulling her back; the other, through the influence of books she has read, pushing her forward. The opposing forces are apparent in her speech and her manners, both of which are degraded by her environment, and improved by her acquaintance—slight though it be—with literature. The time is early forenoon.

MARY (looking at the paper). On a little bye-road, out beyant Finglas, he was found.

(MRS. BOYLE enters by door R.; she has been shopping and carries a small parcel in her hand. She is 45 years of age, and twenty

years ago she must have been a pretty woman ; but her face has now assumed that look which ultimately settles down upon the faces of the women of the working-class ; a look of listless monotony and harassed anxiety, blending with an expression of mechanical resistance. Were circumstances favourable, she would probably be a handsome, active and clever woman.)

MRS. BOYLE. Isn't he come in yet ?

MARY. No, mother.

MRS. BOYLE (R.). Oh, he'll come in when he likes ; strutting about the town like a paycock with Joxer, I suppose. (*Putting parcel on table.*) I hear all about Mrs. Tancred's son is in this mornin's paper.

(MRS. BOYLE crosses behind MARY, takes off hat and black shawl, and flings them on bed in alcove.)

MARY. The full details are in it this mornin' ; seven wounds he had—one entherin' the neck, with an exit wound beneath the left shoulder-blade ; another in the left breast penethratin' the heart, an' . . .

JOHNNY (*springing up from the fire*). Oh, quit that readin', for God's sake ! Are yous losin' all your feelin's ? It'll soon be that none of yous'll read anythin' that's not about butcherin' ! (*He goes quickly into the room L.*)

MARY (*looking after JOHNNY*). He's getting very sensitive, all of a sudden.

(MRS. BOYLE comes down to table R.)

MRS. BOYLE. I'll read it myself, Mary, by an' by, when I come home. Everybody's sayin' that he was a Die-hard—thanks be to God that Johnny had nothin' to do with him this long time. . . . (*Opening the parcel and taking out some sausages, which she places on a plate.*) Ah, then, if that father o' yours doesn't come in soon for his breakfast, he may go without any ; I'll not wait much longer for him.

(MRS. BOYLE takes plate of sausages from table, goes over to dresser, and puts them in bottom cupboard.)

MARY. Can't you let him get it himself when he comes in ?

MRS. BOYLE. Yes, an' let him bring in Joxer Daly along with him ? Ay, that's what he'd like, an' that's what he's waitin' for—till he thinks I'm gone to work, an' then sail in with the boul' Joxer, to burn all the coal an' dhrink all the tea in the place, to show them what a good Samaritan he is ! But I'll stop here till he comes in, if I have to wait till to-morrow mornin'. (*Goes over and sits beside fire.*)

VOICE OF JOHNNY (*inside*). Mother !

MRS. BOYLE. Yis ?

VOICE OF JOHNNY. Bring us in a dhrink o' wather.

MRS. BOYLE. Bring in that fella a dhrink o' wather, for God's sake, Mary.

MARY (*still before mirror, arranging hair*). Isn't he big an' able enough to come out an' get it himself?

MRS. BOYLE (*getting up from fire, going to dresser, fills a glass with water*). If you weren't well yourself, you'd like somebody to bring you in a glass of water.

(MRS. BOYLE goes in with water to room L. and returns and sits down by the fire.)

MRS. BOYLE. Isn't it terrible to have to be waitin' this way! You'd think he was bringin' twenty poun's a week into the house the way he's going on. He wore out the Health Insurance long ago, he's afther wearin' out the unemployment dole, an', now, he's thryin' to wear out me! An' constantly singin', no less, when he ought always to be on his knees offerin' up a Novena for a job!

MARY (*tying a ribbon, fillet-wise, around her head*). I don't like this ribbon, ma; I think I'll wear the green—it looks bettther than the blue.

MRS. BOYLE (*poking fire viciously*). Ah, wear whatever ribbon you like, girl, only don't be botherin' me. I don't know what a girl on strike wants to be wearin' a ribbon round her head for or silk stockin's on her legs either; it's wearin' them things that make the employers think they're givin' you too much money.

MARY. The hour is past now when we'll ask the employers' permission to wear what we like.

MRS. BOYLE. I don't know why you wanted to walk out for Jennie Claffey; up to this you never had a good word for her.

MARY. What's the use of belongin' to a Trades Union if you won't stand up for your principles? Why did they sack her? It was a clear case of victimization. We couldn't let her walk the streets, could we?

MRS. BOYLE. No, of course you couldn't—you wanted to keep her company. Wan victim wasn't enough. When the employers sacrifice wan victim, the Trades Unions go wan bettther be sacrificin' a hundred.

MARY. It doesn't matther what you say, ma—a principle's a principle.

MRS. BOYLE. Yis; an' when I go into oul' Murphy's to-morrow, an' he gets to know that, instead o' payin' all, I'm goin' to borry more, what'll he say when I tell him a principle's a principle? What'll we do if he refuses to give us any more on tick?

MARY. He daren't refuse—if he does, can't you tell him he's paid?

MRS. BOYLE. It's lookin' as if he was paid, whether he refuses or no.

(JOHNNY appears at the door L.)

JOHNNY. Y was lyin' down; I thought yous were gone. Oul' Simon Mackay is thrampin' about like a horse over me head, an' I can't sleep with him—they're like thunder-claps in me brain! The curse o'—God forgive me for goin' to curse!

MRS. BOYLE. There, now; go back an' lie down agen, an' I'll bring you in a nice cup o' tay.

JOHNNY. Tay, tay, tay! You're always thinkin' o' tay. If a man was dyin', you'd thry to make him swally a cup o' tay! (*He goes back.*)

MRS. BOYLE. I don't know what's goin' to be done with him. The bullet he got in the hip in Easter Week was bad enough, but the bomb that shatthered his arm in the fight in O'Connell Street put the finishin' touch on him. I knew he was makin' a fool of himself. God knows I went down on me bended knees to him not to go agen the Free State.

MARY. He stuck to his principles, an', no matter how you may argue, ma, a principle's a principle.

VOICE OF JOHNNY (*in room L.*). Is Mary goin' to stay here?

MARY (*shouting*). No, I'm not going to stay here; you can't expect me to be always at your beck an' call, can you?

VOICE OF JOHNNY. I won't stop here be meself!

MRS. BOYLE. Amn't I nicely handicapped with the whole o' yous! I don't know what any o' yous ud do without your ma. (*At door L., to JOHNNY.*) Your father'll be here in a minute, an' if you want anythin', he'll get it for you.

JOHNNY. I hate assin' him for anythin'. . . . He hates to be assed to stir. . . . Is the light lightin' before the picture o' the Virgin?

MRS. BOYLE. Yis, yis! The wan inside to St. Anthony isn't enough, but he must have another wan to the Virgin here!

(JERRY DEVINE *enters hastily by door R.* *He is about 25, well set, active and earnest. He is a type, becoming very common now in the Labour Movement, of a mind knowing enough to make the mass of his associates, who know less, a power, and too little to broaden that power for the benefit of all.* MARY *seizes her jumper, and runs hastily into room L.*)

JERRY (*R., breathless from speed*). Where's the Captain, where's the Captain, Mrs. Boyle?

MRS. BOYLE (*sitting at fire; turning to look at JERRY*). You may well ass a body that: he's wherever Joxer Daly is—dhrinkin' in some snug or another.

JERRY. Father Farrell is just afther stoppin' to tell me to run up an' get him to go to the new job that's goin' on in Rathmines; his cousin is foreman o' the job, an' Father Farrell was speakin' to him about poor Johnny an' his father bein' idle so long, an' the foreman told Father Farrell to send the Captain up an' he'd give him a start—I wondher where I'd find him?

MRS. BOYLE (*getting up and crossing to JERRY, R.*). You'll find he's ayther in Ryan's or Foley's.

JERRY. I'll run round to Ryan's—I know it's a great house o' Joxer's. (*He rushes out door R.*)

(MRS. BOYLE *crosses over to fire again, and sits in chair, in an agitated state.*)

MRS. BOYLE (*piteously*). There now, he'll miss that job, or I know for what! If he gets win' o' the word, he'll not come back till evenin', so that it'll be too late. There'll never be any good got out o' him so long as he goes with that shouldher-shruggin' Joxer. I killin' meself workin', an' he sthruddin' about from mornin' till night like a paycock!

(*The footsteps of "CAPTAIN" BOYLE and JOXER are heard coming upstairs, outside door R. "CAPTAIN" BOYLE is singing in a deep, sonorous voice, "Sweet Spirit, hear my Prayer." MRS. BOYLE lifts her head and listens; she rises from her seat, goes and stands listening behind table.*)

BOYLE (*outside door R., singing*). Sweet Spirit, hear me prayer!
Hear . . . oh . . . hear . . . me prayer . . . hear, oh, hear . . .
Oh, he . . . ar . . . oh, he . . . ar . . . me . . . pray . . . er!

JOXER (*outside*). Ah, that's a darlin' song, a daanarin' song!

(MRS. BOYLE *goes to alcove, backstage L., sits on bed so that curtains hide her from view.*)

(*"CAPTAIN" BOYLE comes slowly in, R. He is a man of about 60; stout, grey-haired and stocky. His neck is short, and his head looks like a stone ball that one sometimes sees on top of a gate-post. His cheeks, reddish-purple, are puffed out, as if he were always repressing an almost irrepressible ejaculation. On his upper lip is a crisp, tightly cropped moustache; he carries himself with the upper part of his body slightly thrown back, and his stomach slightly thrust forward. His walk is a slow, consequential strut. His clothes are dingy, and he wears a faded seaman's cap with a glazed peak.*)

BOYLE (*to JOXER, who is still outside*). Come on, come on in, Joxer; she's gone out long ago, man. If there's nothing else to be got, we'll furrage out a cup o' tay, anyway. It's the only bit I get in comfort when she's away. 'Tisn't Juno should be her pet name at all, but Deirdre of the Sorras, for she's always grousin'.

(JOXER *steps cautiously into the room by door R. He may be younger than "CAPTAIN" BOYLE, but he looks a lot older. His face is like a bundle of crinkled paper; his eyes have a cunning twinkle; he is spare and loosely built; he has a habit of constantly shrugging his shoulders with a peculiar twitching movement, meant to be ingratiating. His face is invariably ornamented with a grin.*)

JOXER (R.). It's a terrible thing to be tied to a woman that's

always grousin'. I don't know how you stick it—it ud put years on me. It's a good job she has to be so ofen away, for (*with a shrug*) when the cat's away, the mice can play!

BOYLE (*with a commanding and complacent gesture*). Pull over to the fire, Joxer, an' we'll have a cup o' tay in a minute.

JOXER. Ah, a cup o' tay's a darlin' thing, a daaarlin' thing—the cup that cheers but doesn't . . .

(MRS. BOYLE cuts JOXER's speech short by springing suddenly out of alcove, and stands angrily between BOYLE and JOXER, glaring from one to the other. Both are stupefied.)

MRS. BOYLE (*with sweet irony—poking the fire, and turning her head to glare at JOXER*). Pull over to the fire, Joxer Daly, an' we'll have a cup o' tay in a minute! Are you sure, now, you wouldn't like an egg?

JOXER. I can't stop, Mrs. Boyle; I'm in a desperate hurry, a desperate hurry.

MRS. BOYLE. Pull over to the fire, Joxer Daly; people is always far more comfortabler here than they are in their own place.

(JOXER makes hastily for the door. BOYLE stirs to follow him; thinks of something to relieve the situation—stops, and says suddenly—“Joxer!”)

JOXER (*at door, ready to bolt*). Yis?

(BOYLE crosses in front of MRS. BOYLE to JOXER R., gets close to him and speaks meaningly.)

BOYLE. You know the foreman o' that job that's going on down in Killesther, don't you, Joxer?

JOXER (*puzzled*). Foreman—Killesther?

(MRS. BOYLE is standing staring at them; she is L.C. and listens to them quietly, but with an ominous glare in her eyes. They are trying to deceive her, but she sees through them.)

BOYLE (*with a meaning look*). He's a buttty o' yours, isn't he?

JOXER (*the meaning of BOYLE dawning on him*). The foreman at Killesther—oh yis, yis. He's an oul' buttty o' mine—oh, he's a darlin' man, a daarin' man.

BOYLE. Oh, then, it's a sure thing. It's a pity we didn't go down at breakfast first thing this mornin'—we might ha' been working now; but you didn't know it then.

JOXER (*with a shrug*). It's betther late than never.

BOYLE. It's nearly time we got a start, anyhow; I'm fed up knockin' round, doin' nothin'. He promised you—gave you the straight tip?

JOXER. Yis. “Come down on the blow o' dinner,” says he, “an' I'll start you, an' any friend you like to brin' with you.” Ah, says I, you're a darlin' man, a daaarlin' man.

BOYLE. Well, it couldn't come at a betther time—we're a long time waitin' for it.

JOXER. Indeed we were; but it's a long lane that has no turnin'.

BOYLE. The blow up for dinner is at one—wait till I see what time 'tis. (*He goes over to the mantelpiece, and gingerly lifts the clock.*)

(MRS. BOYLE *is standing* L.C. *watching the movements of* BOYLE *and* JOXER.)

MRS. BOYLE (*watching* BOYLE). Mind now, how you go on fiddling with that clock; you know the least little thing sets it astray.

BOYLE (*with clock in his hand, paying no attention to* MRS. BOYLE). The job couldn't come at a betther time; I'm feelin' in great fettle, Joxer. I'd hardly believe I ever had a pain in me legs, an' last week I was nearly crippled with them.

JOXER. That's betther an' betther; ah, God never shut wan door but he opened another!

BOYLE (*looking at clock*). It's only eleven o'clock—we've lashing of time.

(*Puts clock carefully back on mantelpiece, crosses front of* MRS. BOYLE, *over to* JOXER, *and stands beside him, L.*)

I'll slip on me moleskins after breakfast, an' we can saunther down at our ayse.

(BOYLE *goes over to dresser, takes up shovel, and returns to the side of* JOXER, *displaying the shovel.*)

I think, Joxer, we'd betther bring our shovels.

JOXER. Yis, Captain, yis; it's betther to go fully prepared an' ready for all eventualities. You bring your long-tailed shovel, an' I'll bring me navvy. We mighten want them, an', then agen, we might: for want of a nail the shoe was lost, for want of a shoe the horse was lost, an' for want of a horse the man was lost—aw, that's a darlin' proverb, a daarin' . . .

(MRS. BOYLE, *in an angry way, suddenly rushes towards* JOXER; JOXER *hurriedly runs out by door* R. MRS. BOYLE *shuts the door with a bang. BOYLE, pushed aside in the rush, goes back to the dresser, leaving the shovel back where he got it. MRS. BOYLE, in a raging temper, crosses quickly to L. and busies herself with the fire.*)

BOYLE (*apologetically*). We won't be long pullin' ourselves together again, when I'm workin' for a few weeks.

(MRS. BOYLE *takes no notice.*)

The foreman on the job is an oul' buttty o' Joxer's; I have an idea

that I know him meself. (*Silence.*) . . . There's a button off the back o' me moleskin trousers. . . . If you leave out a needle an' thread I'll sew it on meself. . . . Thanks be to God, the pains in me legs is gone, anyhow!

MRS. BOYLE (*with a burst*). Look here, Mr. Jacky Boyle, them yarns won't go down with Juno. I know you an' Joxer Daly of an oul' date, an', if you think you're able to come it over me with them fairy tales, you're in the wrong shop.

BOYLE (*at front of dresser, coughing subduedly to relieve the tenseness of the situation*). U-u-u-ugh!

MRS. BOYLE. Butty o' Joxer's! Oh, you'll do a lot o' good as long as you continue to be a butty o' Joxer's!

BOYLE. U-u-u-ugh!

MRS. BOYLE. Shovel! Ah, then, me boyo, you'd do far more work with a knife an' fork than ever you'll do with a shovel! If there was e'er a genuine job goin' you'd be dh'other way about—not able to lift your arms with the pains in your legs! Your poor wife slavin' to keep the bit in your mouth, an' you gallivantin' about all the day like a paycock!

BOYLE. It ud be betther for a man to be dead, betther for a man to be dead.

MRS. BOYLE (*ignoring the interruption*). Everybody callin' you "Captain," an' you only wanst on the wather, in an oul' collier from here to Liverpool, when anybody, to listen or look at you, ud take you for a second Christo For Columbus!

BOYLE. Are you never goin' to give us a rest?

MRS. BOYLE. Oh, you're never tired o' lookin' for a rest.

BOYLE. D'ye want to dhrive me out o' the house?

(MRS. BOYLE goes from fireplace, crosses rapidly to dresser; BOYLE, fearfully getting out of her way, comes downstage R.C. MRS. BOYLE takes breakfast things from dresser—bread, sugar, etc., and arranges them on table. She does all in an angry way.)

MRS. BOYLE. It ud be easier to dhrive you out o' the house than to dhrive you into a job. Here, sit down an' take your breakfast—it may be the last you'll get, for I don't know where the next is goin' to come from.

BOYLE. If I get this job we'll be all right.

MRS. BOYLE. Did ye see Jerry Devine?

BOYLE (*testily*). No, I didn't see him.

MRS. BOYLE. No, but you seen Joxer. Well, he was here lookin' for you.

BOYLE. Well, let him look!

MRS. BOYLE. Oh, indeed, he may well look, for it ud be hard for him to see you, an' you stuck in Ryan's snug.

BOYLE. I wasn't in Ryan's snug—I don't go into Ryan's.

MRS. BOYLE. Oh, is there a mad dog there? Well, if you weren't in Ryan's you were in Foley's.

BOYLE. I'm telling you for the last three weeks I haven't tasted a dhrop of intoxicatin' liquor. I wasn't in ayther wan snug or dh'other—I could swear that on a prayer-book—I'm as innocent as the child unborn!

(MRS. BOYLE goes to dresser, takes out sausages from cupboard underneath, crosses to fire, puts them on pan, and starts to cook them. BOYLE crosses to back of table.)

MRS. BOYLE. Well, if you'd been in for your breakfast you'd ha' seen him.

BOYLE (*suspiciously*). What does he want me for?

MRS. BOYLE. He'll be back any minute an' then you'll soon know.

BOYLE (*starting to door R.*). I'll dhrop out an' see if I can meet him.

MRS. BOYLE (*catching him by shoulder*). You'll sit down an' take your breakfast, an' let me go to me work, for I'm an hour late already waitin' for you.

BOYLE. You needn't ha' waited, for I'll take no breakfast—I've a little spirit left in me still!

MRS. BOYLE (*releasing him, and moving away L.*). Are you goin' to have your breakfast—yes or no?

BOYLE (*too proud to yield*). I'll have no breakfast—you can keep your breakfast. (*Plaintively*.) I'll knock out a bit somewhere, never fear.

MRS. BOYLE. Nobody's goin' to coax you—don't think that. (*She vigorously replaces the pan and the sausages in the press, and returns to fire.*)

BOYLE. I've a little spirit left in me still.

(JERRY DEVINE enters hastily by door R., looks around and sees BOYLE.)

JERRY. Oh, here you are at last! I've been searchin' for you everywhere. The foreman in Foley's told me you hadn't left the snug with Joxer ten minutes before I went in.

MRS. BOYLE. An' he swearin' on the holy prayer-book that he wasn't in no snug!

BOYLE (*to JERRY*). What business is it o' yours whether I was in a snug or no? What do you want to be gallopin' about afther me for? Is a man not to be allowed to leave his house for a minute without havin' a pack o' spies, pimps an' informers cantherin' at his heels?

JERRY (*R.*). Oh, you're takin' a wrong view of it, Mr. Boyle; I simply was anxious to do you a good turn. I have a message for you from Father Farrell: he says that if you go to the job that's on in Rathmines, an' ask for Foreman Mangan, you'll get a start.

BOYLE (*standing to L. of JERRY*). That's all right, but I don't

want the motions of me body to be watched the way an astronomer ud watch a star. If you're folleyin' Mary aself, you've no pereogative to be folleyin' me. (*Suddenly catching his thigh.*) U-ugh, I'm afther gettin' a terrible twinge in me right leg!

MRS. BOYLE (*near fire*). Oh, it won't be very long now till it travels into your left wan. It's miraculous that whenever he scents a job in front of him, his legs begin to fail him! Then, me bucko, if you lose this chance, you may go an' furrage for yourself!

JERRY. This job'll last for some time too, Captain, an' as soon as the foundations are in, it'll be cushy enough.

BOYLE (*dolefully*). Won't it be a climbin' job? How d'ye expect me to be able to go up a ladder with these legs? An', if I get up aself, how am I goin' to get down agen?

MRS. BOYLE (*viciously*). Get wan o' the labourers to carry you down in a hod! You can't climb a laddher, but you can skip like a goat into a snug!

JERRY. I wouldn't let meself be let down that easy, Mr. Boyle; a little exercise, now, might do you all the good in the world.

BOYLE. It's a docthor you should have been, Devine—maybe you know more about the pains in me legs than meself that has them?

JERRY (*irritated*). Oh, I know nothin' about the pains in your legs; I've brought the message that Father Farrell gave me, an' that's all I can do.

MRS. BOYLE (*catching him by shoulder and pulling him towards table*). Here, sit down an' take your breakfast, an' go an' get ready; an' don't be actin' as if you couldn't pull a wing out of a dead bee.

BOYLE. I want no breakfast, I tell you; it ud choke me afther all that's been said. I've a little spirit left in me still.

(MRS. BOYLE *roughly pulls him past her to L., and pushes him towards door L.*)

MRS. BOYLE. Well, let's see your spirit, then, an' go in at oncest an' put on your moleskin trousers.

BOYLE (*halting at door L.*). It ud be betther for a man to be dead. U-ugh! There's another twinge in me other leg! Nobody but meself knows the sufferin' I'm goin' through with the pains in these legs of mine. (*He goes into room L.*)

MRS. BOYLE (*putting on her hat and coat which she takes from the bed in alcove*). I'll have to push off, now, for I'm terribly late already; but I was determined to stay an' hunt that Joxer, this time.

(*She hurries out by door R. JERRY is standing at R. end of table as MARY comes in by door L. She is evidently going out, for she wears her coat, and is putting on her hat.*)

JERRY. Are you going out, Mary?

MARY. It looks like it when I'm putting on my hat, doesn't it?

JERRY. The bitther word agen, Mary.

MARY. You won't allow me to be friendly with you; if I thry, you deliberately misundherstand it.

JERRY. I didn't always misundherstand it; you were ofen delighted to have the arms of Jerry around you.

MARY. If you go on talkin' like this, Jerry Devine, you'll make me hate you!

JERRY. Well, let it be either a weddin' or a wake! Listen, Mary, I'm standin' for the Secretaryship of our Union. There's only one opposin' me; I'm popular with all the men, an' a good speaker—all are sayin' that I'll get elected.

MARY. Well?

JERRY. The job's worth three hundred an' fifty pounds a year, Mary. You an' I could live nice an' cosily on that; it would lift you out o' this place an' . . .

MARY. I haven't time to listen to you now—I have to go.

(She crosses towards door R., in front of table; JERRY meets her half-way C.).

JERRY *(appealingly)*. Mary, what's come over you with me for the last few weeks? You hardly speak to me, an' then only a word with a face o' bitterness on it. Have you forgotten, Mary, all the happy evenin's that were as sweet as the scented hawthorn that sheltered the sides o' the road as we saunthered through the country?

MARY. That's all over now. When you get your new job, Jerry, you won't be long findin' a girl far betther than I am for your sweetheart.

JERRY. Never, never, Mary! No matter what happens, you'll always be the same to me.

MARY. I must be off; please let me go, Jerry.

JERRY. I'll go a bit o' the way with you.

MARY. You needn't, thanks; I want to be by meself. *(She tries to pass.)*

JERRY *(catching her arm)*. You're goin' to meet another fella; you've clicked with someone else, me lady!

MARY. That's no concern o' yours, Jerry Devine; let me go!

JERRY. I saw yous comin' out o' the Cornflower Dance Class, an' you hangin' on his arm—a thin lanky strip of a Micky Dazzler, with a walkin'-stick an' gloves!

MARY *(protestingly)*. You're hurtin' me arm! Let me go, or I'll scream, an' then you'll have the oul' fella out on top of us!

JERRY. Don't be so hard on a fella, Mary, don't be so hard.

BOYLE *(appearing at the door L. in wide moleskin trousers)*. What's the meanin' of all this hillabaloo?

MARY. Let me go, let me go!

BOYLE. D'ye hear me—what's all this hillabaloo about?

JERRY (*plaintively*). Will you not give us one kind word, one kind word, Mary?

BOYLE (*loudly*). D'ye hear me talkin' to yous? What's all this hillabaloo for?

JERRY. Let me kiss your hand, your little, tiny, white hand!

BOYLE. Your little, tiny, white hand—are you takin' leave o' your senses, man?

(MARY *breaks away and rushes out door R.*)

BOYLE (*to JERRY*). This is nice goin's on in front of her father!

JERRY (*turning and speaking viciously to BOYLE*). Ah, dhry up, for God's sake! (*He follows MARY out door R.*)

BOYLE (*L. of table, standing speechless for a moment*). Chiselurs don't care a damn now about their parents. They're bringin' their fathers' grey hairs with sorra to the grave, an' laffin' at it, laffin' at it!

(*Turns to L. and sits down in chair by the fire.*)

Ah, I suppose the same everywhere—the whole worl's in a state of chassis! Breakfast. Well, they can keep their breakfast for me. (*Emphatically.*) Not if they went down on their bended knees, would I take it! I'll show them I've a little spirit left in me still.

(*He sits still for a few moments; then gets up very slowly, crosses stage behind table, and goes to dresser. Opens the bottom cupboard, takes out a plate and looks at it.*)

(*Scornfully.*) Sassige! Well, let her keep her sassige.

(*He puts the plate of sausages back in cupboard; returns slowly to chair by fire; sits down, and remains still for a few seconds; then he takes the teapot from the hob, and shakes it.*)

Uh, the tea's wet, right enough.

(*He replaces the teapot on the hob, and again sits still for a few moments. Then he rises, crosses stage slowly, behind table, to dresser, takes out the plate of sausages, returns to fire, puts the sausages on the pan, puts both on fire, sits down in chair, and attends to the sausages with a fork.*)

(*Singing as he cooks.*) When the robins nest agen,

And the flowers are in bloom,

When the Springtime's sunny smile seems to banish all sorrow an' gloom;

Then me bonny blue-ey'd lad, if me heart be true till then—

He's promised he'll come back to me,

When the robins nest agen!

(*He lifts his head at the high note, and then drops his eyes to the pan.*)

(*Singing.*) When the . . .

(Steps are heard approaching ; he whips the pan off the fire and puts it under the bed, then sits down at the fire. The door opens and a bearded man looking in, says : " You don't happen to want a sewin' machine ? ")

BOYLE *(furiously)*. No, I don't want e'er a sewin' machine !

(He returns the pan to the fire, and commences to sing again.)

(Singing). When the robins nest agen,
And the flowers they are in bloom,
He's . . .

(A thundering knock is heard at the street door.)

There's a terrible tatherararaa—that's a stranger—that's nobody belongin' to the house.

(Another loud knock.)

JOXER *(sticking his head in at the door)*. Did ye hear them tatherarabs ?

BOYLE. Well, Joxer, I'm not deaf.

JOHNNY *(appearing in his shirt and trousers at the door on L., his face is anxious and his voice is tremulous)*. Who's that at the door ; who's that at the door ? Who gave that knock—d'ye yous hear me—are yous deaf or dhrunk or what ?

BOYLE *(to JOHNNY)*. How the hell do I know who 'tis ? Joxer, stick your head out o' the window an' see.

JOXER. An' mebbe get a bullet in the kisser ? Ah, none o' them thricks for Joxer ! It's betther to be a coward than a corpse !

(BOYLE gets up from chair, goes cautiously across stage, behind table to window above door R. He carefully shoves the curtains aside, and cautiously peeps out into street.)

BOYLE. It's a fella in a thrench coat.

JOHNNY *(terrified)*. Holy Mary, Mother of God ! I—

BOYLE. He's goin' away—he must ha' got tired knockin'.

(JOHNNY goes back to room L. BOYLE comes back to fire, and attends to sausages. JOXER remains standing beside door R. BOYLE turns with a fork the sausage in pan ; turns round and gives an invitatory gesture to JOXER.)

Sit down an' have a cup o' tay, Joxer.

JOXER. I'm afraid the missus ud pop in on us agen before we'd know where we are. Somethin's tellin' me to go at wanst.

BOYLE. Don't be superstitious, man ; we're Dublin men, an' not boyes that's only afther comin' up from the bog o' Allen—though if she did come in, right enough, we'd be caught like rats in a thrap.

JOXER. An' you know the sort she is—she wouldn't listen to reason—an' wanse bitten twice shy.

(BOYLE *thinks for a moment, leaves the pan on the hob, goes over to window c. back, lifts up and down the bottom part.*)

BOYLE (to JOXER). If the worst came to the worst, you could dart out here, Joxer.

(JOXER *comes over to window c. back, and stands beside BOYLE.*)

It's only a dhrop of a few feet to the roof of the return room, an' the first minute she goes into the other room I'll give you the bend, an' you can slip in an' away.

JOXER (*yielding to temptation*). Ah, I won't stop very long, anyhow.

(JOXER *goes to table, takes a chair, and sits down at R. end of table.*

BOYLE *goes back to fire, and takes the pan in his hand again.*)

(*Picking a book from table.*) Who's is the buk?

BOYLE. Aw, one o' Mary's; she's always readin' lately—nothin' but thrash, too. There's one I was lookin' at dh'other day: three stories, The Doll's House, Ghosts, an' The Wild Duck—buks only fit for chiselurs!

(*He puts sausage on his own plate, and the gravy on JOXER's.*)

JOXER. Didja ever rade *Elizabeth, or Th' Exile o' Sibayria* . . . ah, it's a darlin' story, a daarin' story!

BOYLE. You eat your sassige, an' never min' *Th' Exile o' Sibayria*.

(BOYLE *fills out tea, and sits down L. end of table.*)

JOXER. What are you wearin' your moleskin trousers for?

BOYLE. I have to go to a job, Joxer. Just affther you'd gone, Devine kem runnin' in to tell us that Father Farrell said if I went down to the job that's goin' on in Rathmines I'd get a start.

JOXER (*congratulating BOYLE*). Be the holy, that's good news!

BOYLE. How is it good news? I wondher if you were in my condition, would you call it good news?

JOXER (*dipping his bread in gravy*). I thought . . .

BOYLE. You thought! You think too sudden sometimes, Joxer. D'ye know, I'm hardly able to crawl with the pains in me legs!

JOXER. Yis, yis; I forgot the pains in your legs. I know you can do nothin' while they're at you.

BOYLE. You forgot; I don't think any of yous realize the state I'm in with the pains in me legs. What ud happen if I had to carry a bag o' cement?

JOXER. Ah, any man havin' the like of them pains id be down an' out, down an' out.

BOYLE. I wouldn't mind if he had said it to meself; but, no, oh no, he rushes in an' shouts it out in front o' Juno, an' you know what Juno is, Joxer. We all know Devine knows a little more than the rest of us, but he doesn't act as if he did; he's a good boy, sober, able to talk an' all that, but still . . .

JOXER. Oh ay ; able to argufy, but still . . .

BOYLE. If he's runnin' afther Mary, aself, he's not goin' to be runnin' afther me. Captain Boyle's able to take care of himself. Afther all, I'm not gettin' brought up on Virol. I never heard him usin' a curse ; I don't believe he was ever dhrunk in his life—sure he's not like a Christian at all !

JOXER. You're afther takin' the word out o' me mouth—afther all, a Christian's natural, but he's unnatural.

BOYLE. His oul' fella was just the same—a Wicklow man.

JOXER. A Wicklow man ! That explains the whole thing. I've met many a Wicklow man in me time, but I never met wan that was any good.

BOYLE. "Father Farrell," says he, "sent me down to tell you." Father Farrell ! . . . D'ye know, Joxer, I never like to be beholden to any o' the clergy.

JOXER. It's dangerous, right enough.

BOYLE. If they do anything for you, they'd want you to be livin' in the Chapel. . . . (*With great solemnity.*) I'm goin' to tell you somethin', Joxer, that I wouldn't tell to anybody else—the clergy always had too much power over the people in this unfortunate country.

JOXER. You could sing that if you had an air to it !

BOYLE (*becoming enthusiastic*). Didn't they prevent the people in "'47" from seizin' the corn, an' they starvin' ; didn't they down Parnell ; didn't they say that hell wasn't hot enough nor eternity long enough to punish the Fenians ? We don't forget, we don't forget them things, Joxer. If they've taken everything else from us, Joxer, they've left us our memory.

JOXER (*tilting emotionally*). For mem'ry's the only friend that grief can call its own, that grief . . . can . . . call . . . its own !

BOYLE. Father Farrell's beginnin' to take a great intererst in Captain Boyle ; because of what Johnny did for his country, says he to me wan day. It's a curious way to reward Johnny be makin' his poor oul' father work. But, that's what the clergy want, Joxer—work, work, work for me an' you ; havin' us mulin' from mornin' till night, so that they may be in betther fettle when they come hoppin' round for their dues ! Job ! Well, let him give his job to wan of his hymn-singin', prayer-spoutin', craw-thumpin' Confraternity men !

(*The voice of a coal-block vendor is heard chanting in the street.*)

VOICE OF COAL VENDOR. Blocks . . . coal-blocks ! Blocks . . . coal-blocks !

JOXER. God be with the young days when you were steppin' the deck of a manly ship, with the win' blowin' a hurricane through the masts, an' the only sound you'd hear was, "Port your helm !" an' the only answer, "Port it is, sir !"

BOYLE. Them was days, Joxer, them was days. Nothin' was

too hot or too heavy for me then. Sailin' from the Gulf o' Mexico to the Antanartic Ocean. I seen things, I seen things, Joxer, that no mortal man should speak about that knows his Catechism. Ofen, an' ofen, when I was fixed to the wheel with a marlinspike, an' the win's blowin' fierce an' the waves lashin' an' lashin', till you'd think every minute was goin' to be your last, an' it blowed, an' blowed—blew is the right word, Joxer, but blowed is what the sailors use. . . .

JOXER. Aw, it's a darlin' word, a daarin' word.

BOYLE. An', as it blowed an' blowed, I ofen looked up at the sky (*looks up at ceiling*) an' assed meself the question—what is the stars, what is the stars?

VOICE OF COAL VENDOR. Any blocks, coal-blocks; blocks, coal-blocks!

JOXER. Ah, that's the question, that's the question—what is the stars?

BOYLE. An' then, I'd have another look, an' I'd ass meself (*looking at ceiling*) what is the moon?

JOXER. Ah, that's the question (*looking at ceiling*) what is the moon, what is the moon?

(*Rapid steps are heard coming towards door R. BOYLE hastily starts to gather the breakfast things together. JOXER flies to window, back C. The door R. opens, and the black face of the coal-block vendor peeps into the room.*)

COAL-BLOCK VENDOR. D'ye yous want any blocks?

BOYLE (*with a roar of anger*). No, we don't want any blocks!

(*BOYLE has got a fright, and stands limply beside fireplace. JOXER has got a fright, too, comes from window, and stands R. of BOYLE.*)

JOXER (*coming back with a sigh of relief*). That's ather puttin' the heart across me—I could ha' sworn it was Juno. I'd betther be goin', Captain; you couldn't tell the minute Juno'd hop in on us.

BOYLE. Let her hop in; we may as well have it out first as at last. I've made up me mind—I'm not goin' to do only what she damn well likes.

JOXER. Them sentiments does you credit, Captain; I don't like to say anything as between man an' wife, but I say as a butty, as a butty, Captain, that you've stuck it too long, an' that it's about time you showed a little spunk. How can a man die betther than facin' fearful odds,

For th' ashes of his fathers an' the temples of his gods.

BOYLE. She has her rights—there's no one denyin' it, but haven't I me rights too?

JOXER. Of course you have—the sacred rights o' man! (*Putting a hand on BOYLE's shoulder.*)

BOYLE. To-day, Joxer, there's goin' to be issued a proclamation

be me, establishin' an independent Republic, an' Juno'll have to take an oath of allegiance.

JOXER. Be firm, be firm, Captain; the first few minutes'll be the worst:—if you gently touch a nettle it'll sting you for your pains; grasp it like a lad of mettle, an' as soft as silk remains!

VOICE OF MRS. BOYLE (*outside*). Can't stop, Mrs. Madigan—I haven't a minute!

JOXER (*almost paralysed*). Holy God, here she is!

(JOXER, in a terrible state of fear, rushes to window back c., opens it and climbs hastily out on to the roof outside. BOYLE catches the ends of the tablecloth, leaving things within, makes a huge bag of the cloth, runs over to dresser back r., and crams the bundle into the bottom cupboard. He runs back to fireplace, sits down on chair, which he pulls from table as he passes, and gazes quietly into the fire.)

BOYLE. I knew that fella ud stop till she was in on top of us!

(MRS. BOYLE enters hastily; she is flurried and excited.)

MRS. BOYLE (*with a look of surprise at BOYLE*). Oh, you're in—you must have been only afther comin' in?

BOYLE. No, I never went out.

MRS. BOYLE. It's curious, then, you never heard the knockin'. (*She puts her coat and hat on bed in alcove.*)

BOYLE. Knockin'? Of course I heard the knockin'.

MRS. BOYLE. An' why didn't you open the door, then? I suppose you were so busy with Joxer that you hadn't time.

BOYLE. I haven't seen Joxer since I seen him before. Joxer! What ud bring Joxer here?

MRS. BOYLE (*she begins to tidy room, dust chairs, etc.*). D'ye mean to tell me that the pair of yous wasn't collogin' together here when me back was turned?

BOYLE. What ud we be collogin' together about? I have somethin' else to think of besides collogin' with Joxer. I can swear on all the holy prayer-books . . .

MRS. BOYLE. That you weren't in no snug! (*Coming over to BOYLE.*) Go on in at wanst now, an' take off that moleskin trousers o' yours, an' put on a collar an' tie to smarten yourself up a bit. There's a visitor comin' with Mary in a minute, an' he has great news for you.

BOYLE (*standing up, protestingly*). A job, I suppose; let us get wan first before we start lookin' for another.

MRS. BOYLE. That's the thing that's able to put the win' up you. Well, it's no job, but news that'll give you the chance o' your life.

BOYLE. What's all the mysthery about?

MRS. BOYLE. G'win an take off the moleskin trousers when you're told!

(BOYLE goes into room on left.)

(MRS. BOYLE tidies up the room, puts the shovel under the bed, and goes to the press.)

Oh, God bless us, looka the way everything's thrun about! Oh, Joxer was here, Joxer was here!

(MARY enters with CHARLIE BENTHAM; he is a young man of 25, tall, good-looking, with a very high opinion of himself generally. He is dressed in a brown coat, brown knee-breeches, grey stockings, a brown sweater, with a deep blue tie; he carries gloves and a walking-stick.)

(Fussing round.) Come in, Mr. Bentham; sit down, Mr. Bentham, in this chair; it's more comfortabler than that, Mr. Bentham. Himself'll be here in a minute; he's just takin' off his trousers.

MARY. Mother!

BENTHAM. (Sits in chair back of table, R. end.) Please don't put yourself to any trouble, Mrs. Boyle—I'm quite all right here, thank you.

MRS. BOYLE. An' to think of you knowin' Mary, an' she knowin' the news you had for us, an' wouldn't let on; but it's all the more welcomer now, for we were on our last lap! (Tidying things on dresser.) You must excuse th' state o' th' place, Mr. Bentham; th' minute I turn me back that man o' mine always makes a littler o' th' place, a littler o' th' place.

BENTHAM. Don't worry, Mrs. Boyle; it's all right, I assure . . .

BOYLE (inside room L.). Where's me braces; where in th' name o' God did I leave me braces. . . . Ay, did you see where I put me braces?

JOHNNY (inside, calling out). Ma, will you come in here an' take da away ou' o' this or he'll dhrive me mad.

MRS. BOYLE (going towards door). Dear, dear, dear, that man'll be lookin' for somethin' on the day of judgment. (Crossing over back to door of room L. and calling in to BOYLE.) Look at your braces, man, hanging round your neck.

BOYLE (inside room L.). Aw, holy God!

MRS. BOYLE (calling to JOHNNY, room L.). Johnny, Johnny, come out here for a minute.

JOHNNY (replying from room L.). Ah, leave Johnny alone, an' don't be annoyin' him!

MRS. BOYLE. Come on, Johnny, till I introduce you to Mr. Bentham. (To BENTHAM.) Meson, Mr. Bentham; he's afther goin' through the mill. He was only a chiselur of a Boy Scout in Easter Week, when he got hit in the hip; and his arm was blew off in the fight in O'Connell Street.

(JOHNNY comes in.)

Here he is, Mr. Bentham; Mr. Bentham, Johnny. None can deny he done his bit for Irelan', if that's goin' to do him any good.

JOHNNY (*boastfully*). I'd do it agen, ma, I'd do it agen; for a principle's a principle.

MRS. BOYLE. Ah, you lost your best principle, me boy, when you lost your arm; them's the only sort o' principles that's any good to a workin' man.

JOHNNY. Ireland only half free'll never be at peace while she has a son left to pull a trigger.

(*He leaves BENTHAM, crosses to fire, and sits down on chair there.*)

MRS. BOYLE. To be sure, to be sure—no bread's a lot betther than half a loaf. (*Calling to BOYLE in room L.*) Will you hurry up, there?

(*BOYLE comes in from room L. He is wearing his best trousers, which aren't too good, and looks uncomfortable in collar and tie.*

MRS. BOYLE takes BOYLE by arm, leads him to BENTHAM, and introduces them. They shake hands in an awkward way. BOYLE is to the L., BENTHAM to the R., and MRS. BOYLE in O.)

This is me husband; Mr Boyle, Mr. Bentham.

BENTHAM. Ah, very glad to know you, Mr. Boyle. How are you?

BOYLE. Ah, I'm not too well at all; I suffer terrible with pains in me legs. Juno can tell you there what . . .

MRS. BOYLE. You won't have many pains in your legs when you hear what Mr. Bentham has to tell you.

BENTHAM. Juno! What an interesting name! It reminds one of Homer's glorious story of ancient gods and heroes.

BOYLE (*who doesn't know what he means*). Yis, doesn't it? You see, Juno was born an' christened in June; I met her in June; we were married in June, an' Johnny was born in June, so wan day I says to her, "You should ha' been called Juno," an' the name stuck to her ever since.

MRS. BOYLE. Here, we can talk o' them things agen; let Mr. Bentham say what he has to say now.

(*MRS. BOYLE sets a chair for BENTHAM in front of table, R. end; BOYLE carries a chair to front of table, L. end; MRS. BOYLE sits down on chair behind table. BENTHAM and BOYLE sit down on their chairs, facing audience. JOHNNY remains near fire, but turns to hear what is to be said. MARY stands behind the chair of BOYLE. BENTHAM takes a large-looking document from breast pocket, opens it out. There is a feeling of suppressed excitement.*)

BENTHAM (*pulling his chair a little closer to BOYLE*). Well, Mr. Boyle, I suppose you'll remember a Mr. Ellison of Santry—he's a relative of yours, I think?

BOYLE (*viciously*). Is it that prognosticator an' procrastinator! Of course I remember him.

BENTHAM. Well, he's dead, Mr. Boyle . . .

BOYLE. Sorra many'll go into mournin' for him.

MRS. BOYLE. Wait till you hear what Mr. Bentham has to say, an' then, maybe, you'll change your opinion.

BENTHAM. A week before he died he sent for me to write his will for him. He told me that there were two only that he wished to leave his property to: his second cousin, Michael Finnegan of Santry, and John Boyle his first cousin of Dublin.

BOYLE (*excitedly*). Me, is it me, me?

BENTHAM. You, Mr. Boyle; I'll read a copy of the will that I have here with me, which has been duly filed in the Court of Probate. (*He takes a paper from his pocket and reads*):

"6th February, 1922.

This is the last Will and Testament of William Ellison, of Santry, in the County of Dublin. I hereby order and wish my property to be sold and divided as follows:—

£20 to the St. Vincent De Paul Society.

£60 for Masses for the repose of my soul (5s. for Each Mass).

The rest of my property to be divided between my first and second cousins.

I hereby appoint Timothy Buckley, of Santry, and Hugh Brierly, of Coolock, to be my Executors.

(*Signed*)

WILLIAM ELLISON.

HUGH BRIERLY.

TIMOTHY BUCKLY.

CHARLES BENTHAM, N.T."

BOYLE (*eagerly*). An' how much'll be comin' out of it, Mr. Bentham?

BENTHAM. The executors told me that half of the property would be anything between £1,500 and £2,000.

MARY. A fortune, father, a fortune!

JOHNNY. We'll be able to get out o' this place now, an' go somewhere we're not known.

MRS. BOYLE. You won't have to trouble about a job for awhile, Jack.

BOYLE (*fervently*). I'll never doubt the goodness o' God agen.

BENTHAM. I congratulate you, Mr. Boyle. (*They shake hands.*)

BOYLE (*jumping up from chair*). An' now, Mr. Bentham, you'll have to have a wet.

BENTHAM (*puzzled*). A wet?

BOYLE. A wet—a jar—a boul!

MRS. BOYLE (*horrified*). Jack, you're speakin' to Mr. Bentham, an' not to Joxer.

BOYLE (*solemnly*). Juno . . . (*looking at MARY*) Mary . . . (*looking at JOHNNY*) Johnny . . . we'll have to go into mournin' at wanst. . . . I never expected that poor Bill ud die so sudden. . . . Well, we all have to die some day . . . you, Juno, to-day . . . an' me, maybe, to-morrow. . . . It's sad, but it can't be

helped. . . . Requiescat in pace . . . or, usin' our oul' tongue like St. Patrick or St. Briget, Guh sayeree jeea ayera !

MARY (*laughing*). Oh, father, that's not Rest in Peace ; that's God save Ireland.

BOYLE. U-u-ugh, it's all the same—isn't it a prayer? . . . Juno, I'm done with Joxer ; he's nothin' but a prognosticator an' a . . .

(*Suddenly the window in wall, c. back, is violently pulled up, and JOXER angrily and rapidly climbs into the room. He runs to door R. They are all startled at his entrance. BENTHAM retreats to back of stage, round R. end of table, and stands L. of dresser. MARY goes L. of table and stands on L. of BENTHAM. BOYLE retreats towards L. MRS. BOYLE remains standing behind table.*)

JOXER (*turning at door R.*). You're done with Joxer, are you ? Maybe you thought I'd stop on the roof all the night for you ! Joxer out on the roof with the win' blowin' through him was nothin' to you an' your friend with the collar an' tie !

MRS. BOYLE. What in the name o' God brought you out on the roof ; what were you doin' there ?

JOXER (*ironically*). I was dreamin' I was standin' on the bridge of a ship, an' she sailin' the Antharatic Ocean ; an' it blowed, an' blowed, an' me lookin' up at the sky, an' sayin', " what is the stars, what is the stars ? "

(*MRS. BOYLE leaves the back of table, hurries down to door R. in a determined manner, opens the door, angrily, and stands beside it.*)

MRS. BOYLE. Here, get ou' o' this, Joxer Daly ; I was always thinkin' you had a slate off.

JOXER (*moving to the door*). I have to laugh every time I look at the deep-sea sailor ; an' a row on a river ud' make him sea-sick !

BOYLE. Get ou' o' this before I take the law into me own hands !

JOXER (*going out*). Say aw rewaear, but not good-bye. Lookin' for work, an' prayin' to God he won't get it !

(*He goes.*)

MRS. BOYLE. I'm tired tellin' you what Joxer was ; maybe now you see yourself the kind he is.

BOYLE (*fervently*). He'll never blow the froth off a pint o' mine agen, that's a sure thing. Johnny . . . Mary . . . you're to keep yourselves to yourselves for the future. Juno, I'm done with Joxer. . . . I'm a new man from this out. . . .

(*He moves to R. MRS. BOYLE comes L. They meet c. Clasp hands and sing emotionally :*)

Oh, me darlin' Juno, I will be thrue to thee.

Me own, me darlin' Juno, you're all the world to me.

CURTAIN.

ACT II

SCENE.—*The same room, but the furniture is richer looking. A highly polished chest of drawers where the dresser was, L. back. The window, back L. of chest of drawers, is curtained with a gaudy-patterned cretonne. The table is covered with a dark red embroidered cloth. Downstage R., is a gaudily upholstered sofa, three chairs upholstered in the same way, one at each end of table and one by the fire. A large vase, filled with gay artificial flowers, is on top of chest of drawers, R. end. At other end are a cheap teaset, a bottle of whisky and several bottles of stout. A lamp, with a silken shade, is lighted on the table. A few cheap pictures on walls. Coloured Christmas paper-chains hang from the four corners of the ceiling, meeting in the C. The votive light, under the picture of the Blessed Virgin, is still burning.*

BOYLE, in his shirt-sleeves, is voluptuously stretched on the sofa, smoking a pipe. He is half-asleep. After a few moments' pause the voice of JOXER, outside door R., is heard tilting softly: "Me pipe I'll smoke, as I drive me moke,—are you there, mor. . . ce . . . ar . . . i . . . tee?"

BOYLE rises at once to a sitting posture; takes a small attaché-case from under the sofa, opens it, takes out writing-paper; takes a fountain-pen from his breast pocket, and pretends to be busy writing. Puts case on knees and uses it as desk.

BOYLE (calling out). Come along, Joxer, me son; come along. JOXER (putting his head in door R.). Are you be yourself?

BOYLE. Come on, come on; that doesn't matther; I'm mather now, an' I'm goin' to remain mather.

(JOXER comes in door R.)

JOXER. How d'ye feel now, as a man o' money?

BOYLE (solemnly). It's a responsibility, Joxer, a great responsibility.

JOXER. I suppose 'tis now, though you wouldn't think it.

BOYLE. Ever since the Will was passed I've run hundhreds o' dockyments through me han's—I tell you, you have to keep your wits about you. (He busies himself with papers.)

JOXER (about to go). Well, I won't disturb you; I'll dhrop in when . . .

BOYLE (*hastily*). It's all right, Joxer, this is the last one to be signed to-day. (*He signs a paper, puts it into attaché-case, which he shuts with a snap. He screws on cap of fountain-pen, puts it back in breast pocket, and sits back with an important air on the sofa.*) Now, Joxer, you want to see me? I'm at your service. What can I do for you, me man?

JOXER. I've just dhropped in with the £3 5s. that Mrs. Madigan riz on the blankets an' table for you, an' she says you're to be in no hurry payin' it back. (*Takes money out of pocket and gives it to BOYLE.*)

BOYLE. She won't be long without it; I expect the first cheque for a couple o' hundhred any day. There's the five bob for yourself—(*offers him money*) go on, take it, man; it'll not be the last you'll get from the Captain. Now an' agen we have our differ, but we're together all the time.

JOXER (*pocketing the money given by BOYLE*). Me for you, an' you for me, like the two Musketeers.

BOYLE. Father Farrell stopped me to-day an' tole me how glad he was I fell in for the money.

JOXER (*sitting down R. end of sofa*). He'll be stoppin' you ofen enough now; I suppose it was "Mr." Boyle with him?

BOYLE. He shuk me be the han' . . .

JOXER (*ironically*). I met with Napper Tandy, an' he shuk me be the han'!

BOYLE (*admonishingly*). You're seldom asthray, Joxer, but you're wrong shipped this time. What you're sayin' of Father Farrell is very near to blasfeemey. I don't like anyone to talk disrespectful of Father Farrell.

JOXER. You're takin' me up wrong, Captain; I wouldn't let a word be said agen Father Farrell—the heart o' the rowl, that's what he is; I always said he was a darlin' man, a daarin' man.

BOYLE. Comin' up the stairs who did I meet but that bummer, Nugent. "I seen you talkin' to Father Farrell," says he, with a grin on him. "He'll be folleyin' you," says he, "like a Guardian Angel from this out"—all the time the oul' grin on him, Joxer.

JOXER. I never seen him yet but he had that oul' grin on him!

BOYLE (*with dignity*). "Mr. Nugent," says I, "Father Farrell is a man o' the people, an', as far as I know the History o' me country, the priests was always in the van of the fight for Irelan's freedom."

JOXER (*ferenly*). Who was it led the van, Soggart Aroon?

Since the fight first began, Soggart Aroon?

BOYLE. "Who are you tellin'?" says he. "Didn't they let down the Fenians, an' didn't they do in Parnell? An' now . . ." "You ought to be ashamed o' yourself," says I, interruptin' him, "not to know the History o' your country." An' I left him gawkin', where he was.

JOXER. Where ignorance's bliss 'tis folly to be wise; I wondher did he ever read the Story o' Irelan'.

BOYLE. Be J. L. Sullivan? Don't you know he didn't.

JOXER (*rubbing his hands*). Ah, it's a darlin' buk, a daarin' buk!

BOYLE. You'd better be goin' now, Joxer, his Majesty, Bentham, 'll be here any minute, now.

JOXER. Be the way things is lookin', it'll be a match between him an' Mary. She's thrun over Jerry altogether. Well, I hope it will, for he's a darlin' man.

BOYLE. I'm glad you think so—I don't. (*Irritably.*) What's darlin' about him?

JOXER (*nonplussed*). I only seen him twiced; if you want to know me, come an' live with me.

BOYLE (*scornfully*). He's too ignified for me—to hear him talk you'd think he knew as much as a Boney's Oraculum. He's given up his job as teacher, an' is goin' to become a solicitor in Dublin—he's been studyin' law. I suppose he thinks I'll set him up, but he's wrong shipped. An' th' other fella—Jerry's as bad. The two o' them ud give you a pain in your face, listenin' to them; Jerry believin' in nothin', an' Bentham believin' in everythin'. One that says all is God an' no man; an' th' other that says all is man an' no God!

JOXER (*getting up*). Well, I'll be off now.

BOYLE (*getting up off sofa*). Don't forget to dhrop down afther awhile; we'll have a quiet jar, an' a song or two.

JOXER (*going towards door R.*). Never fear.

BOYLE (*following JOXER*). An' tell Mrs. Madigan that I hope we'll have the pleasure of her organization at our little entertainment.

JOXER. Righto; we'll come down together. (*He goes out by door R.*)

(BOYLE *shuts door R., after JOXER, as JOHNNY comes out from room L., goes to fire, and sits down moodily on a chair there. BOYLE, filling his pipe, looks at him for a few moments, and shakes his head, as much as to say, there goes a hopeless case. He is crossing back to sofa, when MRS. BOYLE'S voice is heard speaking outside door R.*)

MRS. BOYLE'S VOICE (*outside door R.*). Open the door, Jack—this thing has me nearly killed with the weight.

(BOYLE *turns, runs to door R., and opens it; MRS. BOYLE enters carrying a gramophone, followed by MARY carrying gramophone horn and a few parcels. MRS. BOYLE leaves the gramophone on top of chest of drawers, takes the horn from MARY and fixes it in gramophone. MARY leaves the parcels, containing cakes, on the table.*)

MRS. BOYLE (*out of breath*). Carrying that from Henry Street was no joke.

(BOYLE *stands back and gazes at gramophone in admiration. All except JOHNNY look at instrument.*)

BOYLE (*admiringly*). Uh, that's a grand-looking instrhument! How much was it?

(MRS. BOYLE *takes off hat and coat, leaving them in alcove, back.*)

MRS. BOYLE. Pound down, an' five to be paid at two shillin's a week.

BOYLE. That's reasonable enough.

MRS. BOYLE. I'm afraid we're runnin' into too much debt; first the furniture, an' now this.

BOYLE (*dismissing an anxiety*). The whole lot won't be much out of £2,000.

MARY (*at window, c. back*). I don't know what you wanted a gramophone for—I know Charlie hates them; he says they're destructive of real music.

BOYLE (*indignantly*). Desthructive of music—that fella ud give you a pain in your face. All a gramophone wants is to be properly played; its thrue wondher is only felt when everythin's quiet—what a gramophone wants is dead silence!

MARY. But, father, Jerry says the same; afther all you can only appreciate music when your ear is properly trained.

BOYLE. That's another fella ud give you a pain in your face. Properly thrained! I suppose you couldn't appreciate football unless your fut was properly thrained.

MRS. BOYLE (*to MARY*). Go on in ower that an' dress, or Charlie'll be in on you, an' tea nor nothin'll be ready.

(MARY *goes into room L.*)

(MRS. BOYLE *opens parcels, takes cakes out and puts them on plate taken from chest of drawers. She goes on arranging things for tea on the table.*)

(*Looking over anxiously at JOHNNY.*) You didn't look at our new gramophone, Johnny?

JOHNNY. 'Tisn't gramophones I'm thinking of.

MRS. BOYLE. An' what is it you're thinkin' of, allanna?

JOHNNY. Nothin', nothin', nothin'.

MRS. BOYLE. Sure, you must be thinkin' of somethin'; it's yourself that has yourself the way y'are; sleepin' wan night in me sisher's, an' the nex' in your father's brother's—you'll get no rest goin' on that way.

JOHNNY. I can rest nowhere, nowhere, nowhere.

MRS. BOYLE. Sure, you're not thryin' to rest anywhere.

JOHNNY. Let me alone, let me alone, let me alone, for God's sake.

(A knock at street door.)

MRS. BOYLE (*in a flutter*). Here he is; here's Mr. Bentham!

BOYLE. Well, there's room for him; it's a pity there's not a brass band to play him in.

MRS. BOYLE. We'll han' the tea round, an' not be clusthered round the table, as if we never seen nothin'.

(*Another knock at door R.* MRS. BOYLE goes to it excitedly, opens it, and BENTHAM comes in.)

(*To BENTHAM, effusively.*) Give your hat and stick to Jack, there . . .

(BENTHAM crosses stage in front of table to BOYLE, L., and offers hat and stick. BOYLE, with a sour grimace, takes them reluctantly, goes upstage between table and sofa, and throws them contemptuously in corner above door L. MRS. BOYLE places chair L. below fireplace.)

Sit down, Mr. Bentham, in this chair by the fire. Mary'll be out to you in a minute.

(BENTHAM sits on chair given by MRS. BOYLE. BOYLE comes downstage, gets a chair, and sits down above fireplace, almost facing BENTHAM, but in full view of audience. MRS. BOYLE goes back behind table to dresser, and continues to arrange for tea.)

BOYLE (*solemnly and with an air of great importance*). I seen be the paper this mornin' that Consols was down half per cent. That's serious, min' you, an' shows the whole counthry's in a state o' chassis.

MRS. BOYLE. What's Consols, Jack?

BOYLE. Consols? Oh, Consols is—oh, there's no use tellin' women what Consols is—th' wouldn't undherstand.

BENTHAM. It's just as you were saying, Mr. Boyle . . .

(MARY comes in, charmingly dressed, from room L.; she comes down to L. end of table, and stands facing BENTHAM. BENTHAM rises, shakes hands with MARY, and sits down again. MARY is wearing a blue ribbon fillet round her hair, and has a green one in her hand.)

Oh, good evening, Mary; how pretty you're looking!

MARY (*archly*). Am I?

BOYLE. We were just talkin' when you kem in, Mary; I was tellin' Mr. Bentham that the whole counthry's in a state o' chassis.

MARY (*to BENTHAM*). Would you prefer the green or the blue ribbon round me hair, Charlie?

MRS. BOYLE (*expostulating*). Mary, your father's speakin'.

BOYLE (*rapidly*). I was jus' tellin' Mr. Bentham that the whole counthry's in a state o' chassis.

MARY. I'm sure you're frettin', da, whether it is or no.

MRS. BOYLE. With all our churches an' religions, the worl's not a bit the better.

BOYLE (*with a commanding gesture*). Tay!

(MARY and MRS. BOYLE serve the tea. MRS. BOYLE pours tea into cups, and MARY carries them round, first to BENTHAM and then to BOYLE, and last to JOHNNY.)

MRS. BOYLE. An' Irelan's takin' a leaf out o' the worl's buk; when we got the makin' of our own laws I thought we'd never stop to look behind us, but instead of that we never stopped to look before us! If the people ud folley up their religion bettther there'd be a bettther chance for us—what do you think, Mr. Bentham?

BENTHAM. I'm afraid I can't venture to express an opinion on that point, Mrs. Boyle; dogma has no attraction for me.

MRS. BOYLE (*sitting drinking her tea behind table*). I forgot you didn't hold with us: what's this you said you were?

BENTHAM. A Theosophist, Mrs. Boyle.

MRS. BOYLE. An' what in the name o' God's a Theosophist?

BOYLE. A Theosophist, Juno, 's a—tell her, Mr. Bentham, tell her.

BENTHAM. It's hard to explain in a few words: Theosophy's founded on The Vedas, the religious books of the East. Its central theme is the existence of an all-pervading Spirit—the Life-Breath. Nothing really exists but this one Universal Life-Breath. And whatever even seems to exist separately from this Life-Breath, doesn't really exist at all. It is all vital force in man, in all animals, and in all vegetation. This Life-Breath is called the Prawna.

MRS. BOYLE. The Prawna! What a comical name!

BOYLE. Prawna; yis, the Prawna. (*Blowing gently through his lips*.) That's the Prawna!

MRS. BOYLE. Whist, whist, Jack.

BENTHAM (*leaving cup and saucer back on table*). The happiness of man depends upon his sympathy with this Spirit. Men who have reached a high state of excellence are called Yogi. Some men become Yogi in a short time, it may take others millions of years.

BOYLE. Yogi! I have seen hundhreds of them in the streets o' San Francisco.

BENTHAM. It is said by these Yogi that if we practise certain mental exercises that we would have powers denied to others—for instance, the faculty of seeing things that happen miles and miles away.

MRS. BOYLE. I wouldn't care to meddle with that sort o' belief; it's a very curious religion, altogether.

BOYLE (*scornfully to MRS. BOYLE. He leaves his cup and saucer back on table*). What's curious about it? Isn't all religions curious; if they weren't, you wouldn't get anyone to believe them. But religions is passin' away—they've had their day like everything else. Take the real Dublin people, f'rinstance: they know more about Charlie Chaplin an' Tommy Mix than they do about Ess. Ess. Peter an' Paul!

MRS. BOYLE. You don't believe in ghosts, Mr. Bentham?

MARY. Don't you know he doesn't, mother?

BENTHAM. I don't know that, Mary. Scientists are beginning to think that what we call ghosts are sometimes seen by persons

of a certain nature. They say that sensational actions, such as the killing of a person, demands great energy, and that that energy lingers in the place where the action occurred. People may live in the place and see nothing, when someone may come along whose personality has some peculiar connection with the energy of the place, and, in a flash, the person sees the whole affair.

JOHNNY (*rising swiftly from his seat by the fire, pale and trembling*). What sort of talk is this to be goin' on with? Is there nothin' bettther to be talkin' about but the killin' of people? My God, isn't it bad enough for these things to happen without talkin' about them?

(JOHNNY goes hurriedly into room L. BENTHAM rises from chair, surprised and agitated.)

BENTHAM. Oh, I'm very sorry, Mrs. Boyle; I never thought . . .

MRS. BOYLE (*apologetically*). Never mind, Mr. Bentham; he's very touchy.

(A frightened scream is heard from JOHNNY in room L. They all rise from their chairs, startled.)

Mother of God, what's that?

(JOHNNY rushes from room L., his face pale, his lips twitching, and his limbs trembling. MRS. BOYLE runs over and catches him in her arms.)

JOHNNY. Shut the door, shut the door, quick, for God's sake! Great God, have mercy on me. Blessed Mother o' God, shelter me, shelter your son!

MRS. BOYLE. What's wrong with you—what ails you?

(MRS. BOYLE half-carries him to bed in alcove and puts him sitting there.)

Sit down, sit down, here on the bed . . . there now, there now.

MARY (*back of table*). What ails you, Johnny?

JOHNNY. I seen him. I seen him . . . kneelin' in front of the statue . . . merciful Jesus, have pity on me!

MRS. BOYLE (*sharply to BOYLE*). Get him a little whisky . . . quick, man, an' don't stand gawkin'.

(BOYLE crosses to chest of drawers R. back, pours a little whisky into glass, adds water, brings it to MRS. BOYLE, gives it to her. MRS. BOYLE gives a drink to JOHNNY, returns the glass to BOYLE, who goes back with the glass to chest of drawers, leaves it down, and stands watching JOHNNY and MRS. BOYLE.)

JOHNNY. Sit here, sit here, mother . . . between me an' the door.

MRS. BOYLE (*comforting him*). I'll sit beside you as long as you like, only tell me what was it came across you at all?

JOHNNY. I seen him. . . . I seen Robbie Tancred kneelin' down before the statue . . . an' the red light shinin' on him . . . an' when I went in . . . he turned an' looked at me . . . an' I seen the woun's bleedin' in his breast. . . . Oh, why did he look at me like that . . . it wasn't my fault that he was done in. . . . Mother o' God, keep him away from me!

MRS. BOYLE (*soothingly*). There, there, child, you've imagined it all. There was nothin' there at all—it was the red light you seen, an' the talk we had put all the rest into your head. Here, dhrink more o' this—it'll do you good. . . . An', now, stretch yourself down on the bed for a little. (*To BOYLE.*) Go in, Jack, an' show him it was only in his own head it was.

BOYLE (*making no move*). E-e-e-e-ch; it's all nonsense; it was only a shadda he saw.

MARY. Mother o' God, he made me heart lep!

BENTHAM. It was simply due to an overwrought imagination—we all get that way at times. (*He sits down again.*)

MRS. BOYLE. There, dear, lie down in the bed, an' I'll put the quilt across you . . . e-e-e-ch, that's it . . . (*she settles him lying on bed*) you'll be as right as the mail in a few minutes.

JOHNNY. Mother, go into the room an' see if the light's lightin' before the statue.

MRS. BOYLE (*to BOYLE*). Jack, run in an' see if the light's lightin' before the statue.

BOYLE (*to MARY*). Mary, slip in an' see if the light's lightin' before the statue.

(*MARY hesitates to go in.*)

BENTHAM. It's all right; Mary, I'll go. (*He goes into the room L., remains for a few moments, and returns.*) Everything's just as it was—the light burning bravely before the statue.

BOYLE. Of course; I knew it was all nonsense.

(*A knock at the door R.*)

BOYLE (*going to open the door*). E-e-e-e-ch.

(*He opens it, and JOXER, followed by MRS. MADIGAN, enters. MRS. MADIGAN is a strong, dapper little woman of about 45; her face is almost always a widespread smile of complacency. She is a woman who, in manner at least, can mourn with them that mourn, and rejoice with them that do rejoice. When she is feeling comfortable, she is inclined to be reminiscent; when others say anything, or following a statement made by herself, she has a habit of putting her head a little to one side, and nodding it rapidly several times in succession, like a bird pecking at a hard berry. Indeed, she has a good deal of the bird in her, but the bird instinct is by no means a melodious one. She is ignorant, vulgar and forward, but her heart is generous withal. For instance, she would help a neighbour's sick child; she would probably kill the child, but her intentions*

would be to cure it ; she would be more at home helping a drayman to lift a fallen horse. She is dressed in a rather soiled grey dress and a vivid purple blouse ; in her hair is a huge comb, ornamented with huge coloured beads. She enters with a gliding step, beaming smile and nodding head. BOYLE receives them effusively.)

BOYLE. Come on in, Mrs. Madigan ; come on in ; I was afraid you weren't comin'. . . . (Styly.) There's some people able to dhress, ay, Joxer ?

JOXER. Fair as the blossoms that bloom in the May, an' sweet as the scent of the new-mown hay. . . . Ah, well, she may wear them.

MRS. MADIGAN (*looking at MARY*). I know some as are as sweet as the blossoms that bloom in the May—oh, no names, no pack dhruill !

BOYLE. An', now, I'll inthroduce the pair o' yous to Mary's intended : Mr. Bentham, this is Mrs. Madigan, an oul' back-parlour neighbour, that, if she could help it at all, ud never see a body shuk !

BENTHAM (*rising, and tentatively shaking the hand of MRS. MADIGAN*). I'm sure, it's a great pleasure to know you, Mrs. Madigan.

MRS. MADIGAN. An' I'm goin' to tell you, Mr. Bentham, you're goin' to get as nice a bit o' skirt in Mary, there, as ever you seen in your puff. Not like some of the dhressed-up dolls that's knockin' about lookin' for men when it's a skelpin' they want. I remember, as well as I remember yestherday, the day she was born—of a Tuesday, the 25th o' June, in the year 1901, at thirty-three minutes past wan in the day be Foley's clock, the pub at the corner o' the street. A cowld day it was too, for the season o' the year, an' I remember sayin' to Joxer, there, who I met comin' up th' stairs, that the new arrival in Boyle's ud grow up a hardy chiselur if it lived, an' that she'd be somethin' one o' these days that nobody suspected, an' so signs on it, here she is to-day, goin' to be married to a young man lookin' as if he'd be fit to commensurate in any position in life it ud please God to call him !

BOYLE (*effusively, indicating sofa to MRS. MADIGAN*). Sit down, sit down, Mrs. Madigan, me oul' sport.

(MRS. MADIGAN *sits down on R. end of sofa*. BOYLE *turns round to JOXER, who is standing on his R., and guides him with an air of importance to be introduced to BENTHAM, who evidently doesn't like the look of JOXER.*)

(*Effusively, to BENTHAM.*) This is Joxer Daly, Past Chief Ranger of the Dear Little Shamrock Branch of the Irish National Foresters, an oul' front top neighbour who never despaired, even in the darkest days of Ireland's sorra.

(JOXER *vigorously shakes the hand of BENTHAM, who does not respond to the friendly feeling of JOXER.*)

JOXER (*turning his head to BOYLE*). Nil desperandum, nil desperandum, Captain.

BOYLE. Sit down, Joxer, sit down.

(*BOYLE indicates chair at L. end of table, and JOXER sits on it. BOYLE returns to chest of drawers, back R., where the drink is. He gets a bottle of stout, brings it to the table and places it at JOXER's elbow, then goes back.*)

(*Going to chest of drawers.*) The two of us was often in a tight corner.

MRS. BOYLE. Ay, in Foley's snug!

JOXER. An' we kem out of it flyin', we kem out of it flyin', Captain.

BOYLE. An', now, for a dhrink—I know yous won't refuse an oul' friend.

MRS. MADIGAN (*to MRS. BOYLE*). Is Johnny not well, Mrs. . . .

MRS. BOYLE (*warningly*). S-s-s-sh.

MRS. MADIGAN. Oh, the poor darlin'.

BOYLE. Well, Mrs. Madigan, is it tea or what?

MRS. MADIGAN. Well, speakin' for meself, I jus' had me tea a minute ago, an' I'm afraid to dhrink any more—I'm never the same when I dhrink too much tay. Thanks, all the same, Mr. Boyle.

BOYLE. Well, what about a bottle o' stout or a dhrop o' whisky?

MRS. MADIGAN. A bottle o' stout ud be a little too heavy for me stummock afther me tay. . . . A-a-ah, I'll thry the ball o' malt.

(*BOYLE at chest of drawers, fills out whisky in a glass, brings it with a small jug of water, to MRS. MADIGAN. He gives the glass of whisky to MRS. MADIGAN and waits to put the water in.*)

There's nothin' like a ball o' malt occasional like—too much of it isn't good. (*To BOYLE, who is adding water.*) Ah, God, Johnny, don't put too much wather on it! (*She drinks.*) I suppose yous'll be lavin' this place.

BOYLE. I'm looking for a place near the sea; I'd like the place that you might say was me cradle, to be me grave as well. The sea is always callin' me.

JOXER. She is callin', callin', callin', in the win' an' on the sea.

BOYLE. Another dhrop o' whisky, Mrs. Madigan?

MRS. MADIGAN. Well, now, it ud be hard to refuse seein' the suspicious times that's in it.

(*The party has settled down for a drink and a few songs. The positions are: MRS. BOYLE sits R. end of table; BOYLE, back of table; JOXER, L. end of table; MRS. MADIGAN, to JOXER's L., on R. end of sofa; MARY sits on sofa, L. of MRS. MADIGAN. JOHNNY on bed in alcove, lying down, resting on elbow; BENTHAM at back, L. of alcove, looking on, not very interested in the proceedings.*)

BOYLE (*rapping on table authoritatively*). Song! Juno . . . Mary . . . home to our Mountains.

MRS. MADIGAN (*enthusiastically*). Hear, hear.

(JOKER takes bottle of stout BOYLE has left on table for him, opens it, pours the beer into a glass, and takes a drink.)

JOKER (*delighted*). Oh, tha's a darlin' song, a daarin' song!

MARY (*bashfully*). Ah no, da; I'm not in a singin' humour.

MRS. MADIGAN. Gawn with you, child, an' you only goin' to be marrid; I remember as well as I remember yestherday,—it was on a lovely August evenin', exactly, accordin' to date, fifteen years ago, come the Tuesday folleyin' the nex' that's comin' on, when me own man (*the Lord be good to him*) an' me was sittin' shy together in a doty little nook on a counthry road, adjacent to The Stiles. "That'll scratch your lovely, little white neck," says he, ketchin' hould of a danglin' bramble branch, holdin' clusters of the loveliest flowers you ever seen, an' breakin' it off, so that his arm fell, accidental like, roun' me waist, an' as I felt it tightenin', an' tightenin', an' tightenin', I thought me buzzum was every minute goin' to burst out into a roystherin' song about: The little green leaves that were shakin' on the threes, The gallivantin' buttherflies, an' buzzin' o' the bees!

BOYLE (*loudly rapping on table*). Ordher, ordher for the song.

(MRS. BOYLE gets up from chair and stands a little downstage, R.)

MRS. BOYLE (*beckoning to MARY*). Come on, Mary, we'll do our best.

(MARY crosses to R. in front of table, and stands on MRS. BOYLE's left. They sing "*Home to our Mountains*." They sing the song simply. When the song is ended, they bow to the company, and return to their places, amid applause, MRS. BOYLE to her chair, and MARY to the sofa.)

BOYLE (*emotionally, at the end of song*). Iull . . . me . . . to . . . rest!

JOKER (*clapping his hands*). Bravo, bravo! Darlin' girulls, darlin' girulls!

MRS. MADIGAN. Juno, I never seen you in betther form.

BENTHAM. Very nicely rendered indeed.

MRS. MADIGAN. A noble call, a noble call!

MRS. BOYLE. What about yourself, Mrs. Madigan?

(After some coaxing, MRS. MADIGAN rises, and in a quavering voice sings the first verse of "*The Young May Moon*.")

The young May moon is beaming, love,
The glow-worm's lamp is gleaming, love;
How sweet to rove
Through Morna's grove,
When the droway world is dreaming, love.

Then awake! The heavens look bright, my dear,
 'Tis never too late for delight, my dear,
 And the best of all ways
 To lenthen our days
 Is to steal a few hours from the night, my dear.

(Becoming husky, amid applause, she sits down.)

Ah, me voice is too husky, now, Juno, though I remember the time when Maisie Madigan could sing like a nightingale at matin' time. I remember as well as I remember yestherday, at a party given to celebrate the comin' of the first chiselur to Annie an' Benny Jameson—who was the barber, yous may remember, in Henrietta Street, that, afther Easter Week, hung out a green, white an' orange pole, an', then, when the Tans started their Jazz dancin', whipped it in agen, an' stuck out a red, white an' blue wan instead, givin' as an excuse that a barber's pole was strictly non-political—singin' "An You'll Remember Me," with the top notes quiverin' in a dead hush of pethrified attention, folleyed be a clappin' o' han's that shuk the tumblers on the table, an' capped be Jameson, the barber, sayin' that it was the best rendherin' of "You'll Remember Me" he ever heard in his natural!

BOYLE (*peremptorily*). Ordher for Joxer's song!

JOXER. Ah no, I couldn't; don't ass me, Captain.

BOYLE. Joxer's song, Joxer's song—give us wan of your shut-eyed wans.

(Joxer settles himself in his chair; takes a drink; clears his throat; solemnly closes his eyes, and begins to sing in a very querulous voice):

She is far from the lan' where her young hero sleeps,
 An' lovers around her are sighing (*He hesitates.*)
 An' lovers around her are sighin' . . . sighin' . . . sighin' . . .

(A pause.)

BOYLE (*imitating Joxer*). "And lovers around her are sighing!" What's the use of you thryin' to sing the song if you don't know it?

MARY. Thry another one, Mr. Daly—maybe you'd be more fortunate.

MRS. MADIGAN. Gawn, Joxer; thry another wan.

JOXER (*starting again*). I have heard the mavis singin' his love song to the morn;

I have seen the dew-dhrop clingin' to the rose jus' newly born;
 but . . . but . . . (*frantically*) To the rose jus' newly born
 . . . newly born . . . born.

JOHNNY. Mother, put on the gramophone, for God's sake, an' stop Joxer's bawlin'.

BOYLE (*commandingly*). Gramophone! . . . I hate to see fellas thryin' to do what they're not able to do.

(BOYLE *arranges the gramophone, and is about to start it, when voices are heard of persons descending the stairs.*)

MRS. BOYLE (*warningly*). Whisht, Jack, don't put it on, don't put it on yet; this must be poor Mrs. Tancred comin' down to go to the hospital—I forgot all about them bringin' the body to the church to-night.

(*The voices of FIRST NEIGHBOUR and MRS. TANCRED are heard speaking outside door R.*)

FIRST NEIGHBOUR. It's a sad journey we're goin' on, but God's good, an' the Republicans won't be always down.

MRS. TANCRED. Ah, what good is that to me now! Whether they're up or down, it won't bring me darlin' boy from the grave.

MRS. BOYLE (*to MARY*). Open the door, Mary, an' give them a bit of light.

(*MARY crosses to R. front of table, and opens door R. MRS. TANCRED—a very old woman—appears; she is obviously shaken by her son's death. She is accompanied by several neighbours.*)

(*MRS. BOYLE runs to door R., and sympathetically brings MRS. TANCRED into room.*)

(*The neighbours are nearest door R. FIRST NEIGHBOUR on MRS. TANCRED'S R., MRS. BOYLE stands on her L.; MARY a little behind MRS. BOYLE. The rest remain in their places.*)

Come in an' have a hot cup o' tay, Mrs. Tancred, before you go.

MRS. TANCRED. Ah, I can take nothin' now, Mrs. Boyle—I won't be long afther him.

FIRST NEIGHBOUR. Still an' all, he died a noble death, an' we'll bury him like a king.

MRS. TANCRED. An' I'll go on livin' like a pauper. Ah, what's the pains I suffered bringin' him into the world to carry him to his cradle, to the pains I'm sufferin' now, carryin' him out o' the world to bring him to his grave!

MARY. It would be better for you not to go at all, Mrs. Tancred, but to stay at home beside the fire with some o' the neighbours.

MRS. TANCRED. I seen the first of him, an' I'll see the last of him.

MRS. BOYLE. You'd want a shawl, Mrs. Tancred; it's a cowl'd night, an' the win's blowin' sharp.

MRS. MADIGAN (*crossing front and running out of door R.*). I've a shawl above.

MRS. TANCRED. Me home is gone, now; he was me only child, an' to think that he was lyin' for a whole night stretched out on the side of a lonely country lane, with his head, his darlin' head, that I ofen kissed an' fondled, half-hidden in the wather of a runnin' brook. An' I'm told he was the leadher of the ambush where me

nex'-door neighbour, Mrs. Mannin', lost her Free State soldier son. An' now here's the two of us oul' women, standin' one on each side of a scales o' sorra, balanced be the bodies of our two dead darlin' sons.

(MRS. MADIGAN returns, and wraps a shawl around her and returns to seat on sofa.)

God bless you, Mrs. Madigan. . . . (She moves slowly towards the door.) Mother o' God, Mother o' God, have pity on the pair of us ! . . . O Blessed Virgin, where were you when me darlin' son was riddled with bullets, when me darlin' son was riddled with bullets ! . . . Sacred Heart of the Crucified Jesus, take away our hearts o' stone . . . an' give us hearts o' flesh ! . . . Take away this murderin' hate . . . an' give us Thine own eternal love !

(MRS. TANCRED and the neighbours go out by door R. MARY crosses over stage, behind table, to BENTHAM, L. of alcove, stops to say something to him (which isn't heard), then goes into room L. MRS. BOYLE sits down on chair R. end of table.)

MRS. BOYLE (explanatorily to BENTHAM). That was Mrs. Tancred of the two-pair back ; her son was found, e'er yestherday, lyin' out beyant Finglas riddled with bullets. A Die-hard he was, be all accounts. He was a nice quiet boy, but latterly he went to hell, with his Republic first, an' Republic last an' Republic over all. He ofen took tea with us here, in the oul' days, an' Johnny, there, an' him used to be always together.

JOHNNY. Am I always to be havin' to tell you that he was no friend o' mine ; I never cared for him, an' he could never stick me. It's not because he was Commandant of the Battalion that I was Quarther-Masther of, that we were friends.

MRS. BOYLE. He's gone now—the Lord be good to him ! God help his poor oul' creature of a mother, for no matther whose friend or enemy he was, he was her poor son.

BENTHAM. The whole thing is terrible, Mrs. Boyle ; but the only way to deal with a mad dog is to destroy him.

MRS. BOYLE. An' to think of me forgettin' about him bein' brought to the church to-night, an' we singin' an' all, but it was well we hadn't the gramophone goin', anyhow.

BOYLE. Even if we had aself. We've nothin' to do with these things, one way or t'other. That's the Government's business, an' let them do what we're payin' them for doin'.

MRS. BOYLE. I'd like to know how a body's not to mind these things ; look at the way they're afther leavin' the people in this very house. Hasn't the whole house, nearly, been massacred ? There's young Dougherty's husband with his leg off ; Mrs. Travers that had her son blew up be a mine in Inchegeela, in Co. Cork ; Mrs. Mannin' that lost wan of her sons in an ambush a few weeks ago, an' now, poor Mrs. Tancred's only child gone West with his body

made a collander of. Sure, if it's not our business, I don't know whose business it is.

BOYLE. Here, there, that's enough about them things; they don't affect us, an' we needn't give a damn. If they want a wake, well, let them have a wake. When I was a sailor, I was always resigned to meet with a wathery grave; an', if they want to be soldiers, well, there's no use o' them squealin' when they meet a soldier's fate.

JOXER (*tilting*). Let me like a soldier fall—me breast expandin' to th' ball!

MRS. BOYLE. In wan way, she deserves all she got; for lately, she let th' Die-hards make an open house of th' place; an' for th' last couple of months, either when th' sun was risin', or when th' sun was settin', you had C.I.D. men burstin' into your room, assin' you where were you born, where were you christened, where were you married, an' where would you be buried!

JOHNNY (*tensely. He slips out of the bed, goes over to fire and sits down there*). For God's sake, let us have no more o' this talk.

MRS. MADIGAN (*to change the subject*). What about Mr. Boyle's song before we start th' gramophone?

MARY (*coming from room L., with hat and coat on*). Mother, Charlie and I are goin' out for a little sthroll.

MRS. BOYLE. All right, darlin'.

BENTHAM (*getting stick and hat, going out with MARY, door R.*). We won't be long away, Mrs. Boyle.

MRS. MADIGAN. Gwan, Captain, gwan.

BOYLE. E-e-e-e-h, I'd want to have a few more jars in me, before I'd be in fettle for singin'.

JOXER. Give us that poem you writ t'other day. (*To the rest*.) Aw, it's a darlin' poem, a daarlin' poem.

MRS. BOYLE. God bless us, is he startin' to write poetry!

BOYLE (*rising to his feet*). E-e-e-e-h. (*He recites in an emotional, consequential manner the following verses*):

Shawn an' I were friends, sir, to me he was all in all.

His work was very heavy and his wages were very small.

None betther on th' beach as Docker, I'll go bail,

'Tis now I'm feelin' lonely, for to-day he lies in jail.

He was not what some call pious—seldom at church or prayer;

For the greatest scoundrels I know, sir, goes every Sunday there.

Fond of his pint—well, rather, but hated the Boss by creed

But never refused a copper to comfort a pal in need.

E-e-e-e-h.

(*He sits down.*)

MRS. MADIGAN. Grand, grand; you should folly that up, you should folly that up.

JOXER. It's a daarlin' poem!

BOYLE (*delightedly*). E-e-e-eh.

JOHNNY (*from seat by fire*). Are yous goin' to put on th' gramophone to-night, or are yous not?

MRS. BOYLE. Gwan, Jack, put on a record.

MRS. MADIGAN. Gwan, Captain, gwan.

BOYLE. Well, yous'll want to keep a dead silence.

(*He sets a record, starts the machine, and it begins to play "If you're Irish, come into the Parlour."* (See note.) *As the tune is in full blare the door is suddenly opened by a brisk, little bald-headed man, dressed circumspectly in a black suit; he glares fiercely at all in the room; he is "NEEDLE" NUGENT, a tailor. He carries his hat in his hand. BOYLE stops gramophone.*)

NUGENT (*loudly*). Are yous goin' to have that thing bawlin' an' the funeral of Mrs. Tancred's son passin' the house? Have none of yous any respect for the Irish people's National regard for the dead?

MRS. BOYLE. Maybe, Needle Nugent, it's nearly time we had a little less respect for the dead, an' a little more regard for the livin'.

MRS. MADIGAN (*indignantly*). We don't want you, Mr. Nugent, to teach us what we learned at our mother's knee. You don't look yourself as if you were dyin' of grief; if y'ass Maisie Madigan anything, I'd call you a real thrue Die-hard an' live-soft Republican, attendin' Republican funerals in the day, an' stoppin' up half the night makin' suits for the Civic Guards!

(*Persons are heard running down to the street, some saying, "Here it is, here it is." NUGENT withdraws by door R., and the rest, except JOHNNY, go to the window above door R., looking into the street, and look out. Sounds of a crowd coming nearer are heard; portion are singing*):

To Jesus' Heart all burning
With fervent love for men,
My heart with fondest yearning
Shall raise its joyful strain.
While ages course along,
Blest be with loudest song,
The Sacred Heart of Jesus
By every heart and tongue.

MRS. BOYLE. Here's the hearse, here's the hearse!

BOYLE. There's t'oul' mother walkin' behin' the coffin.

MRS. MADIGAN. You can hardly see the coffin with the wreaths.

JOXER. Oh, it's a darlin' funeral, a daarin' funeral!

MRS. MADIGAN. We'd have a better view from the street.

BOYLE (*coming away from window, and going out by door R.*). Yes—this place ud give you a crick in your neck.

(*All, except JOHNNY, follow him out by door R. JOHNNY, taking no notice, sits moodily by the fire, gazing into it. After a few moments' pause, a young man in a trench coat, his cap, with a large peak, pulled down over his eyes, enters by door R. He stands just inside door, looking at JOHNNY, who doesn't know that he has entered.*)

THE YOUNG MAN. Quarther-Masther Boyle.

JOHNNY (*turning round with a start*). The Mobilizer!

THE YOUNG MAN. You're not at the funeral?

JOHNNY. I'm not well.

THE YOUNG MAN (*coming to c.*). I'm glad I've found you; you were stoppin' at your aunt's; I called there, but you'd gone. I've to give you an order to attend a Battalion Staff meetin' the night afther to-morrow.

JOHNNY. Where?

THE YOUNG MAN. I don't know; you're to meet me at the Pillar at eight o'clock; then we're to go to a place I'll be told of to-night; there we'll meet a mothor that'll bring us to the meetin'. They think you might be able to know somethin' about them that gave the bend where Commandant Tancred was shelterin'.

(*He returns to door R., and turns to listen to JOHNNY.*)

JOHNNY. I'm not goin', then. I know nothing about Tancred.

THE YOUNG MAN (*at the door R.*). You'd better come for your own sake—remember your oath.

JOHNNY (*passionately*). I won't go! Haven't I done enough for Ireland! I've lost me arm, an' me hip's desthroyed so that I'll never be able to walk right agen! Good God, haven't I done enough for Ireland?

THE YOUNG MAN. Boyle, no man can do enough for Ireland.

(*He goes out by door R.*)

(*Faintly in the distance the crowd is heard saying*):

Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with Thee;
Blessed art Thou amongst women, and blessed, etc.

CURTAIN.

ACT III

SCENE.—*The same as Act II. It is about half-past six on a November evening; a bright fire is burning in the grate; MARY, dressed to go out, is sitting on a chair by the fire, leaning forward, her hands under her chin, her elbows on her knees. A look of dejection, mingled with uncertain anxiety, is on her face. A lamp, turned low, is lighting on the table. The votive light under the picture of the Virgin gleams more redly than ever. It is two months later. MRS. BOYLE is standing front of table, looking anxiously at MARY.)*

MRS. BOYLE. An' has Bentham never even written to you since—not one line for the past month?

MARY (*tonelessly*). Not even a line, mother.

MRS. BOYLE. That's very curious. . . . What came between the two of yous at all? To leave you so sudden, an' yous so great together.

(*She goes back round R. of table, and takes up coat and hat from bed in alcove.*)

To go away t' England, an' not to even leave you his address. . . . The way he was always bringin' you to dances, I thought he was mad after you. Are you sure you said nothin' to him?

MARY. No, mother—at least nothing that could possibly explain his givin' me up.

MRS. BOYLE. You know you're a bit hasty at times, Mary, an' say things you shouldn't say.

MARY. I never said to him what I shouldn't say, I'm sure of that.

MRS. BOYLE (*coming back to front of table*). How are you sure of it?

MARY. Because I love him with all my heart and soul, mother. Why, I don't know; I often thought to myself that he wasn't the man poor Jerry was, but I couldn't help loving him, all the same.

MRS. BOYLE. But you shouldn't be frettin' the way you are; when a woman loses a man, she never knows what she's afther losin', to be sure, but, then, she never knows what she's afther gainin', either. You're not the one girl of a month ago—you look like one pinin' away. It's long ago I had a right to bring you to the doctor, instead of waitin' till to-night.

MARY. There's no necessity, really, mother, to go to the doctor;

nothing serious is wrong with me—I'm run down and disappointed, that's all.

MRS. BOYLE. I'll not wait another minute; I don't like the look of you at all. . . . I'm afraid we made a mistake in throwin' over poor Jerry. . . . He'd have been bettther for you than that Bentham.

MARY. Mother, the best man for a woman is the one for whom she has the most love, and Charlie had it all.

MRS. BOYLE (*putting on her hat and coat*). Well, there's one thing to be said for him—he couldn't have been thinkin' of the money, or he wouldn't ha' left you . . . it must ha' been somethin' else.

MARY (*wearily*). I don't know . . . I don't know, mother . . . only I think . . .

MRS. BOYLE. What d'ye think?

MARY. I imagine . . . he thought . . . we weren't . . . good enough for him.

MRS. BOYLE (*indignantly*). An' what was he himself, only a school teacher? Though I don't blame him for fightin' shy of people like that Joxer fella an' that oul' Madigan wan—nice sort o' people for your father to inthroduce to a man like Mr. Bentham. You might have told me all about this before now, Mary; I don't know why you like to hide everything from your mother; you knew Bentham, an' I'd ha' known nothin' about it if it hadn't bin for the Will; an' it was only to-day, aafter long coaxin', that you let out that he'd left you.

MARY. It would have been useless to tell you—you wouldn't understand.

MRS. BOYLE (*hurt*). Maybe not. . . . Maybe I wouldn't understand. . . . Well, we'll be off now.

(*She crosses round R. end of table and goes over to door L., and speaks to BOYLE inside room L.*)

We're goin' now to the doctor's. Are you goin' to get up this evenin'?

BOYLE (*from inside room L.*). The pains in me legs is terrible! It's me should be poppin' off to the doctor instead o' Mary, the way I feel.

MRS. BOYLE (*vigorously*). Sorra mend you! A nice way you were in last night—carried in in a frog's march, dead to the world. If that's the way you'll go on when you get the money it'll be the grave for you, an asylum for me and the Poorhouse for Johnny.

BOYLE (*irritably*). I thought you were goin'?

MRS. BOYLE (*tartly*). That's what has you as you are—you can't bear to be spoken to. Knowin' the way we are, up to our ears in debt, it's a wonderher you wouldn't ha' got up to go to th' solicitor's an' see if we could ha' gotten a little o' the money even.

BOYLE (*shouting*). I can't be goin' up there night, noon an'

mornin', can I? He can't give the money till he gets it, can he? I can't get blood out of a turnip, can I?

MRS. BOYLE. It's nearly two months since we heard of the Will, an' the money seems as far off as ever. . . . I suppose you know we owe twenty poun's to oul' Murphy?

BOYLE. I've a faint recollection of you tellin' me that before.

MRS. BOYLE. Well, you'll go over to the shop yourself for the things in future—I'll face him no more.

BOYLE. I thought you said you were goin'?

MRS. BOYLE. I'm goin' now; come on, Mary.

(MARY goes over to door R., where she waits dejectedly for MRS. BOYLE.

MRS. BOYLE moves over to join her when she hears BOYLE shouting after her.)

BOYLE (calling from room L.). Ey, Juno, ey!

MRS. BOYLE (halted c. behind table). Well, what d'ye want, now?

BOYLE (inside room L.). Is there e'er a bottle of stout left?

MRS. BOYLE (glancing at chest of drawers). There's two of them here, still.

BOYLE (inside room L.). Show us in one of them, an' leave t'other there till I get up. An' throw us in the paper that's on the table, an' the bottle of liniment that's in th' drawer.

(MRS. BOYLE goes over to chest of drawers, takes a bottle of liniment from one of the drawers, comes down to table, and picks up a paper.)

MRS. BOYLE (to BOYLE inside room L.). What paper is it you want—the *Catholic Herald*?

BOYLE (calling contemptuously from room L.). The *Catholic Herald*! The *News of the World*!

(MRS. BOYLE leaves down the paper she picked up, and picks up the other one from the table. She then brings the paper, bottle of stout and liniment in to BOYLE, room L., and comes out again. She takes second bottle of stout from chest of drawers, and puts it on centre of table and goes over to door L. again.)

MRS. BOYLE (calling in to BOYLE). Mind the candle, now, an' don't burn the house over our heads. I left the other bottle of stout in the centre of the table.

(She crosses over, behind table, to MARY, standing at door R., and both go out by that door. A few moments' pause, and the loud popping of a cork is heard from inside room L.)

(A pause; then outside the door is heard the voice of JOXER lilting softly: "Me pipe I'll smoke, as I dhrove me moke . . . are you . . . there . . . More . . . aar . . . i . . . tee!" A gentle knock is heard and, after a pause, the door opens, and JOXER, followed by NUGENT, enters.)

JOXER. Be God, they must be all out; I was thinkin' there was somethin' up when he didn't answer the signal. We seen Juno an' Mary goin', but I didn't see him, an' it's very seldom he escapes me.

NUGENT. He's not goin' to escape me—he's not goin' to be let go to the fair altogether.

JOXER. Sure, the house couldn't hould them lately; an' he goin' about like a mastherpiece of the Free State counthry; forgettin' their friends; forgettin' God—wouldn't even lift his hat passin' a chapel! Sure they were bound to get a dhrop! An' you really think there's no money comin' to him afther all?

NUGENT. Not as much as a red rex, man; I've been a bit anxious this long time over me money, an' I went up to the solicitor's to find out all I could—ah, man, they were goin' to throw me down the stairs. They toul' me that the oul' cock himself had the stairs worn away comin' up afther it, an' they black in the face tellin' him he'd get nothin'. Some way or another that the Will is writ he won't be entitled to get as much as a make!

JOXER. Ah, I thought there was somethin' curious about the whole thing; I've bin havin' a strange dhreams for the last couple o' weeks. An' I notice that that Bentham fella doesn't be comin' here now—there must be somethin' on the mat there too. Anyhow, who in the name o' God ud leave anythin' to that oul' bummer? Sure it ud be unnatural. An' the way Juno an' him's been throwin' their weight about for the last few months! Ah, him that goes a borrowin' goes a sorrowin'!

NUGENT. Well, he's not goin' to throw his weight about in the suit I made for him much longer. I'm tellin' you seven poun' aren't to be found growin' on the bushes these days.

JOXER (*with virtuous indignation*). An' there isn't hardly a neighbour in the whole street that hasn't lent him money on the strength of what he was goin' to get, but they're after backing the wrong horse. Wasn't it a mercy o' God that I'd nothin' to give him! The softy I am, you know, I'd ha' lent him me last juice! (tuppence). I must have had somebody's good prayers. Ah, afther all, an honest man's the noblest work o' God!

(BOYLE coughs inside. NUGENT and JOXER start and listen. BOYLE coughs again.)

Whisht, damn it, he must be inside in bed.

NUGENT. Inside o' bed or outside of it he's goin' to pay me for that suit, or give it back—he'll not climb up my back as easily as he thinks.

JOXER. Gwan in at wanst, man, an' get it off him, an' don't be a fool.

NUGENT (*crossing JOXER, and going to door L., opening it and looking in*). Ah, don't disturb yourself, Mr. Boyle; I hope you're not sick?

BOYLE (*inside room L.*). Th' oul' legs, Mr. Nugent, the oul' legs.

NUGENT. I just called over to see if you could let me have anything off the suit?

BOYLE. E-e-e-eh, how much is this it is?

NUGENT. It's the same as it was at the start—seven poun's.

(JOKER has been listening gleefully to the argument between BOYLE and NUGENT, as he stands behind table C. He turns to look around the room, and catches sight of the bottle of stout on the table. His eyes are fixed on it for a few moments; then he looks round towards door L., sees that NUGENT is busy speaking to BOYLE, has his back turned to him. With rapid movements, he whips the stout from the table, and shoves it into his breast pocket, and assumes an innocent look.)

BOYLE (from inside room L.). I'm glad you kem, Mr. Nugent; I want a good, heavy top-coat—Irish frieze, if you have it. How much would a top-coat like that be, now?

NUGENT. About six poun's.

BOYLE. Six poun's? (*Adding up.*) Six an' seven . . . six an' seven . . . is thirteen—that'll be thirteen poun's I'll owe you.

(A look of indignant stupefaction comes on NUGENT's face. Then he dashes into room L., and runs out again, with a suit over one arm. He stops outside door L. and looks back.)

NUGENT (looking back into room L.). You'll owe me no thirteen poun's. Maybe you think you're betther able to owe it than pay it.

BOYLE (frantically—inside room). Here, come back to hell ower that! Where'r you goin' with them clothes of mine?

NUGENT. Where am I goin' with them clothes of yours? Well, I like your damn cheek!

BOYLE (inside room). Here, what am I goin' to dhress meself in when I'm goin' out?

NUGENT. You can put yourself in a bolsther-cover, if you like.

(NUGENT crosses to B. behind table, followed by JOKER, whom he passes C.)

JOKER (ironically, as he follows NUGENT). What'll he dhress himself in! Gentleman Jack in his frieze coat.

BOYLE (shouting from inside room L., as NUGENT and JOKER reach door R.). Ey, Nugent; ey, Nugent, Mr. Nugent, Mr. Nugent!

(NUGENT and JOKER go out by door R.)

(After a short pause, BOYLE comes hurrying out of room L., in shirt, trousers and socks. He runs rapidly across behind table, to door R., calling "Ey, Mr. Nugent." He opens door R. and calls out again, "Mr. Nugent; ey, Mr. Nugent." JOKER suddenly meets him at door, as if he had just come up.)

JOKER (meeting him at the door). What's up, what's wrong, Captain?

BOYLE (*frantically*). Nugent's been here an' took away me suit—the only things I had to go out in!

JOXER. Tuk your suit—for God's sake! An' what were you doin' while he was takin' them?

BOYLE (*moving from door R. to behind table*). I was in bed when he stole in like a thief in the night, an' before I knew even what he was thinkin' of, he whipped them from the chair, an' was off like a redshank!

JOXER. An' what, in the name o' God, did he do that for?

BOYLE. What did he do it for? (*Fiercely*.) How the hell do I know what he done it for?—jealousy an' spite, I suppose.

JOXER (*R. of BOYLE*). Did he not say what he done it for?

BOYLE. Amn't I afther tellin' you that he had them whipped up an' was gone before I could open me mouth?

JOXER. That was a very sudden thing to do; there mus' be somethin' behin' it. Did he hear anythin', I wondher?

BOYLE. Did he hear anythin'?—you talk very queer, Joxer—what could he hear?

JOXER. About you not gettin' the money, in some way or t'other?

BOYLE. An' what ud prevent me from gettin' th' money?

JOXER. That's jus' what I was thinkin'—what ud prevent you from gettin' the money—nothin', as far as I can see.

(BOYLE, in a frenzied state of agitation, looks at the table, behind which he has moved, glances round at the chest of drawers, then back at the table with a concentrated look of bewilderment, till the fact that the bottle of stout which MRS. BOYLE left on the table has disappeared. JOXER watches him with a look of pretended wonder.)

BOYLE (*with gaze concentrated on table*). Aw, Holy God!

JOXER (*simulating surprise*). What's up, Jack?

BOYLE (*in tone of fury mixed with resignation*). He must have afther lifted the bottle of stout that Juno left on the table!

JOXER (*pretending to be horrified*). Ah, no, ah, no; he wouldn't be afther doin' that now.

BOYLE (*angrily*). An' who done it, then? (*He points to centre of table*.) Juno left a bottle of stout there, an' it's gone—it didn't walk away, did it?

(*He shambles over from behind table to fireplace, a look of misery on his face. JOXER remains behind table, a look of surprised sorrow on his face.*)

JOXER. Oh, that's shockin'; oh, man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn.

(*The door R. is suddenly opened, and MRS. MADIGAN, excited and angry-looking, comes into room.*)

MRS. MADIGAN (*with a note of sarcasm in her polite manner*). I hope I'm not disturbing you in any discussion on your forthcomin'

legacy—if I may use the word—and that you'll let me have a barny for a minute or two with you, Mr. Boyle.

BOYLE (*uneasily*). To be sure, Mrs. Madigan—an oul' friend's always welcome.

JOXER. Come in the evenin', come in th' mornin'; come when you're assed, or come without warnin', Mrs. Madigan.

BOYLE. Sit down, Mrs. Madigan.

MRS. MADIGAN (*ominously*). Th' few words I have to say can be said standin'. Puttin' aside all formularies, I suppose you remember me lendin' you some time ago three poun's that I raised on blankets an' furniture in me uncle's?

(BOYLE takes a little notebook from his trousers' pocket, passes over a few pages, then looks at a page in the book.)

BOYLE. I remember it well. I have it recorded in me book—three poun's five shillin's from Maisie Madigan, raised on articles pawned; an', item: fourpence, given to make up the price of a pint, on th' principle that no bird ever flew on wan wing; all to be repaid at par, when the ship comes home.

MRS. MADIGAN (L.). Well, ever since I shoved in the blankets I've been perishing with th' cowl, an' I've decided, if I'll be too hot in th' nex' world aself, I'm not goin' to be too cowl in this wan; an' consequently, I want me three poun's, if you please.

BOYLE. This is a very sudden demand, Mrs. Madigan, an' can't be met; but I'm willin' to give you a receipt in full, in full.

MRS. MADIGAN. Come on, out with th' money, an' don't be jack-actin'.

BOYLE. You can't get blood out of a turnip, can you?

MRS. MADIGAN (*rushing over, across front of table, catching BOYLE by the shoulders and shaking him*). Gimme me money, y'oul' reprobate, or I'll shake the worth of it out of you!

BOYLE. Ey, houl' on, there; houl' on, there! You'll wait for your money now, me lassie!

(MRS. MADIGAN is wild with indignation. She looks venomously round the room; her eye lights on the gramophone standing on top of the chest of drawers. She thinks violently for a second. She rushes across behind table, in front of JOXER, who goes back to avoid the rush, to the chest of drawers, R. back, seizes the gramophone, comes downstage L. to the door L., where she pauses to speak.)

MRS. MADIGAN (*as she seizes the gramophone*). I'll wait for it, will I? Well, I'll not wait long; if I can't get the cash, I'll get the worth of it.

BOYLE (*to MRS. MADIGAN, when she seizes the gramophone*). Ey, ey, there, where'r you goin' with that?

MRS. MADIGAN. I'm goin' to th' pawn to get me three quid five shillin's; I'll brin' you th' ticket, an' then you can do what you like, me bucko.

BOYLE. You can't touch that, you can't touch that! It's not my property, an' it's not ped for yet!

MRS. MADIGAN. So much th' better. It'll be an ayse to me conscience, for I'm takin' what doesn't belong to you. You're not goin' to be swankin' it like a paycock with Maisie Madigan's money—I'll pull some of the gorgeous feathers out of your tail!

(MRS. MADIGAN, carrying the gramophone in her arms, goes indignantly out by door R., leaving BOYLE and JOXER gaping in astonishment. A short pause.)

BOYLE (*in utter perplexity*). What's th' world comin' to at all? I ass you, Joxer Daly, is there any morality left anywhere?

JOXER. I wouldn't ha' believed it, only I seen it with me own two eyes. I didn't think Maisie Madigan was that sort of a woman; she has either a sup taken, or she's heard somethin'.

BOYLE (*looking fixedly at JOXER*). Heard somethin'—about what, if it's not any harm to ass you?

JOXER. She must ha' heard some rumour or other that you weren't goin' to get th' money.

BOYLE. Who says I'm not goin' to get th' money?

JOXER. Sure, I know—I was only sayin'.

BOYLE (*coming from fire over to JOXER, behind table*). Only sayin' what?

JOXER. Nothin'.

BOYLE. You were goin' to say somethin', don't be a twister.

JOXER (*angrily*). Who's a twister?

BOYLE. Why don't you speak your mind, then?

JOXER. You never twisted yourself—no, you wouldn't know how!

BOYLE (*shouting*). Did you ever know me to twist; did you ever know me to twist?

JOXER (*fiercely*). Did you ever do anythin' else! Sure, you can't believe a word that comes out o' your mouth.

BOYLE (*violently*). Here, get out, ower o' this; I always knew you were a prognosticator an' a procrastinator!

JOXER (*going out door R., as JOHNNY comes in by door L.*). The anchor's weighed, farewell, ree . . . mem . . . ber . . . me. Jacky Boyle, Esquire, infernal rogue an' damned liar!

JOHNNY. Joxer an' you at it agen?—when are you goin' to have a little respect for yourself, an' not be always makin' a show of us all? (*He sits down moodily in chair by fire.*)

BOYLE. Are you goin' to lecture me now?

JOHNNY. Is mother back from the doctor yet, with Mary?

(After a short pause, MRS. BOYLE enters by door R. By the serious look on her face, it is clear that something has happened. She goes, by R. end of table, to alcove, dragging her feet along in a weary way, and takes off her coat without a word. There is a peculiar silence felt, till BOYLE speaks. She keeps her hat on.)

BOYLE. Well, what did the docthor say about Mary?

(MRS. BOYLE comes downstage R., brings a chair to front R. end of table, points to another chair, front L. end of table, as she sits down on chair R., and speaks to BOYLE.)

MRS. BOYLE (with suppressed agitation). Sit down there, Jack; I've something to say to you . . . about Mary.

(BOYLE, surprised and a little frightened, sits on chair, L. end of table. He shows by his look that he feels something's wrong.)

BOYLE. About . . . Mary. . . . More trouble in our native land. Well, what is it?

MRS. BOYLE. It's about Mary.

BOYLE. Well, what about Mary—there's nothin' wrong with her, is there?

MRS. BOYLE. I'm sorry to say there's a gradle wrong with her.

BOYLE. A gradle wrong with her! (Peevishly.) First Johnny an' now Mary; is the whole house goin' to become an hospital! It's not consumption, is it?

MRS. BOYLE. No . . . it's not consumption . . . it's worse.

JOHNNY. Worse! Well, we'll have to get her into some place ower this, there's no one here to mind her.

MRS. BOYLE. We'll all have to mind her now. You might as well know now, Johnny, as another time. (To BOYLE.) D'ye know what the doctor said to me about her, Jack?

BOYLE. How ud I know—I wasn't there, was I?

MRS. BOYLE. He told me to get her married at wanst.

BOYLE. Married at wanst! An' why did he say the like o' that?

MRS. BOYLE. Because Mary's goin' to have a baby in a short time.

BOYLE (panic-stricken). Goin' to have a baby!—my God, what'll Bentham say when he hears that?

MRS. BOYLE. Are you blind, man, that you can't see that it was Bentham that has done this wrong to her?

BOYLE (passionately). Then he'll marry her, he'll have to marry her!

MRS. BOYLE. You know he's gone to England, an' God knows where he is now.

(BOYLE jumps from his chair in a frenzy of rage, and goes round R. end of table to back, where he clenches his fists, and shows the mood of rage which dominates him.)

BOYLE. I'll folly him, I'll folly him, an' bring him back, an' make him do her justice. The scoundrel, I might ha' known what he was, with his yogeas an' his prawna!

MRS. BOYLE. We'll have to keep it quiet till we see what we can do.

BOYLE. Oh, isn't this a nice thing to come on top o' me, an' the

state I'm in! A pretty show I'll be to Joxer an' to that oul' wan, Madigan! Amn't I afther goin' through enough without havin' to go through this!

MRS. BOYLE. What you an' I'll have to go through'll be nothin' to what poor Mary'll have to go through; for you an' me is middlin' old, an' most of our years is spent; but Mary'll have maybe forty years to face an' handle, an' every wan of them'll be tainted with a bitther memory.

BOYLE (*vengefully*). Where is she? Where is she till I tell her off? I'm tellin' you when I'm done with her she'll be a sorry girl!

MRS. BOYLE. I left her in me sither's till I came to speak to you. You'll say nothin' to her, Jack; ever since she left school she's earned her livin', an' your fatherly care never throubled the poor girl.

BOYLE. Gwan, take her part agen her father! But I'll let you see whether I'll say nothin' to her or no! Her an' her readin'! That's more o' th' blasted nonsense that has the house fallin' down on top of us! What did th' likes of her, born in a tenement house, want with readin'? Her readin's afther bringin' her to a nice pass—oh, it's madnin', madnin', madnin'!

MRS. BOYLE. When she comes back say nothin' to her, Jack, or she'll leave this place.

BOYLE. Leave this place! Ay, she'll leave this place, an' quick too!

MRS. BOYLE. If Mary goes, I'll go with her.

BOYLE (*roughly*). Well, go with her! Well, go, th' pair o' yous! I lived before I seen yous, an' I can live when yous are gone. Isn't this a nice thing to come rollin' in on top o' me afther all your prayin' to St. Anthony an' The Little Flower. An' she's a child o' Mary, too—I wonder what'll the nuns think of her now? An' it'll be bellows'd all over th' disthriect before you could say Jack Robinson; an' whenever I'm seen they'll whisper, "That's th' father of Mary Boyle that had th' kid be th' swank she used to go with; d'ye know, d'ye know?" To be sure they'll know—more about it than I will meself!

JOHNNY (*viciously*). She should be dhruiven out o' th' house she's brought disgrace on!

MRS. BOYLE (*turning to JOHNNY*). Hush, you, Johnny. (*Turning to BOYLE.*) We needn't let it be bellows'd all over the place; all we've got to do is to leave this place quietly an' go somewhere where we're not known, an' nobody'll be th' wiser.

BOYLE. You're talkin' like a two-year-oul' woman. Where'll we get a place ou' o' this?—places aren't that easily got.

MRS. BOYLE. But, Jack, when we get the money . . .

BOYLE (*stopping his walk behind table to look intently at MRS.* BOYLE). Money—what money?

MRS. BOYLE. Why, oul' Ellison's money, of course.

BOYLE. There's no money comin' from oul' Ellison, or anyone

else. Since you've heard of wan throuble, you might as well hear of another. There's no money comin' to us at all—the Will's a washout!

MRS. BOYLE (*stupefied*). What are you sayin', man—no money?

JOHNNY. How could it be a washout?

BOYLE. The boyo that's afther doin' it to Mary done it to me as well. The thick made out the Will wrong; he said in th' Will, only first cousin an' second cousin, instead of mentionin' our names, an' now anyone that thinks he's a first cousin or second cousin t'oul' Ellison can claim the money as well as me, an' they're springin' up in hundreds, an' comin' from America an' Australia, thinkin' to get their whack out of it, while all the time the lawyers is gobblin' it up, till there's not as much as ud buy a stockin' for your lovely daughter's baby!

MRS. BOYLE (*vehemently*). I don't believe it, I don't believe it, I don't believe it!

JOHNNY (*angrily to BOYLE*). Why did you say nothin' about this before?

MRS. BOYLE (*appealingly*). You're not serious, Jack; you're not serious!

BOYLE. I'm tellin' you the scholar, Bentham, made a banjax o' th' Will; instead o' sayin', "th' rest o' me property to be divided between me first cousin, Jack Boyle, an' me second cousin, Mick Finnegan, o' Santhry," he writ down only, "me first an' second cousins," an' the world an' his wife are afther th' property now.

MRS. BOYLE. Now, I know why Bentham left poor Mary in th' lurch; I can see it all now—oh, is there not even a middlin' honest man left in th' world?

JOHNNY (*fiercely to BOYLE*). An' you let us run into debt, an' borreyed money from everybody to fill yourself with beer! An' now, you tell us the whole thing's a washout! Oh, if it's thrue, I'm done with you, for you're worse than me sister Mary!

BOYLE (*threateningly, and moving over by table, to JOHNNY*). You hole your tongue, d'ye hear? I'll not take any lip from you. Go an' get Bentham if you want satisfaction for all that's afther happenin' us.

JOHNNY. I won't hole me tongue, I won't hole me tongue! I'll tell you what I think of you, father an' all as you are . . . you . . .

MRS. BOYLE (*appealing to JOHNNY*). Johnny, Johnny, Johnny, for God's sake, be quiet!

JOHNNY. I'll not be quiet, I'll not be quiet; he's a nice father, isn't he? Is it any wondher Mary went asthray, when . . .

MRS. BOYLE. Johnny, Johnny, for my sake be quiet—for your mother's sake!

BOYLE. I'm goin' out now to have a few dhrinks with th' last few makes I have, an' tell that lassie o' yours not to be here when I come back; for if I lay me eyes on her, I'll lay me han's on her,

an' if I lay me han's on her, I won't be accountable for me actions!

JOHNNY. Take care somebody doesn't lay his han's on you—y'oul' . . .

MRS. BOYLE. Johnny, Johnny!

BOYLE (*at door, about to go out*). Oh, a nice son, an' a nicer daughter, I have. (*Calling loudly upstairs.*) Joxer, Joxer, are you there?

JOXER (*from a distance*). I'm here, More . . . ee . . . aar . . . i . . . tee!

BOYLE. I'm goin' down to Foley's—are you comin'?

JOXER. Come with you? With that sweet call me heart is stirred; I'm only waiting for the word, an' I'll be with you, like a bird!

(BOYLE and JOXER pass the door going out.)

JOHNNY (*throwing himself on the bed*). I've a nice sither, an' a nice father, there's no bettin' on it. I wish to God a bullet or a bomb had whipped me ou' o' this long ago! Not one o' yous, not one o' yous, have any thought for me!

MRS. BOYLE (*with passionate remonstrance*). If you don't whisht, Johnny, you'll drive me mad. Who has kep' th' home together for the past few years—only me. An' who'll have to bear th' biggest part o' this throuble but me—but whinin' an' whingin' isn't goin' to do any good.

JOHNNY. You're to blame yourself for a gradle of it—givin' him his own way in everything, an' never assin' to check him, no matter what he done. Why didn't you look afther th' money? why . . .

(*A knock at door R.* MRS. BOYLE takes no notice, but sits on her chair in despair. The knock again, louder. MRS. BOYLE gets up heavily from chair, crosses front of table, to door R., and opens it. The two furniture-removal men, wearing green baize aprons, enter, and stand to R. of MRS. BOYLE. JOHNNY turns on his seat to see who has come in, and listens to what is said.)

FIRST MAN. We've been sent up be th' Manager of the Hibernian Furnishing Co., Mrs. Boyle, to take back the furniture that was got a while ago.

MRS. BOYLE. Yous'll touch nothin' here—how do I know who yous are?

FIRST MAN (*showing a paper*). There's the ordher, ma'am. (*Reading.*) A chest o' drawers, a table, wan easy an' two ordinary chairs; wan mirror; wan chestherfield divan, an' a wardrobe vase. (*Turning to mate.*) Come on, Bill, it's afther knockin'-off time, already. We'll the chest o' drawers first.

(*The two men cross MRS. BOYLE near door R., and go to back R. Each takes an end of the chest of drawers, and carries it out by door R.* MRS. BOYLE returns to front of table and watches them.)

JOHNNY. For God's sake, mother, run down to Foley's an' bring father back, or we'll be left without a stick.

(The men carry out the table.)

MRS. BOYLE. What good would it be—you heard what he said before he went out.

JOHNNY. Can't you thry; he ought to be here, an' the like of this goin' on.

(MRS. BOYLE goes by L. end of table to alcove, takes her coat from the bed, puts it slowly on, comes downstage by R. end of table, to door R. As she reaches door, MARY enters, tired and dejected. She runs to MRS. BOYLE and puts her arms round her.)

MARY. What's up, mother? I met men carrying away the chest of drawers, an' everybody's talkin' about us not getting the money, after all.

MRS. BOYLE *(near door R., on MARY'S L.)*. Everything's gone wrong, Mary. We're not gettin' a penny out of the Will, not a penny. I'll tell you all when I come back—I'm goin' to look for your father.

(She goes out door R. MARY, with her head bent, crosses front of table, to chair that BOYLE had occupied, L. end of table, and sits down on it. JOHNNY standing, leaning his elbow on mantelpiece, watches her with a scornful look on his face.)

JOHNNY *(bitterly)*. It's wondher you're not ashamed to show your face here, afther what has happened.

(JERRY enters door R., a look of hope on his face. He pauses by door for a second, looks over at MARY, then comes closer, front of table.)

JERRY *(softly)*. Mary!

(MARY does not answer, and sits silently on chair.)

Mary, I want to speak to you for a few moments, may I?

(MARY remains silent. JOHNNY goes slowly into room L. JERRY crosses slowly, front of table to MARY, and stands on her R.)

Your mother has told me everything, Mary, and I have come to you. . . . I have come to tell you, Mary, that my love for you is greater and deeper than ever. . . .

MARY *(with a sob)*. Oh, Jerry, Jerry, say no more; all that is over now; anything like that is impossible now!

JERRY. Impossible? Why do you talk like that, Mary?

MARY. After all that has happened.

JERRY. What does it matter what has happened? We are young enough to be able to forget all those things. *(He catches her hand.)* Mary, Mary, I am pleading for your love. With Labour,

Mary, humanity is above everything; we are the Leaders in the fight for a new life. I want to forget Bentham, I want to forget that you left me—even for a while.

MARY. Oh, Jerry, Jerry, you haven't the bitter word of scorn for me after all.

JERRY (*passionately*). Scorn! I love you, love you, Mary!

MARY (*rising, and looking him in the eyes*). Even though . . .

(MARY *risés from chair, turns to face JERRY, he takes her hand, and she looks up into his eyes.*)

Even though . . .

JERRY. Even though you threw me over for another man; even though you gave me many a bitter word!

MARY. Yes, yes, I know; but you love me, even though . . . even though . . . I'm . . . goin' . . . goin' . . . (*He looks at her questioningly, and fear gathers in his eyes.*) Ah, I was thinkin' so. . . . You don't know everything!

JERRY (*poignantly*). Surely to God, Mary, you don't mean that . . . that . . . that . . .

MARY. Now you know all, Jerry; now you know all!

JERRY. My God, Mary, have you fallen as low as that?

MARY. Yes, Jerry, as you say, I have fallen as low as that.

(JERRY *moves a little away from her, to the R. He wishes to get away, but finds it awkward. He turns towards her again.*)

JERRY. I didn't mean it that way, Mary . . . it came on me so sudden, that I didn't mind what I was sayin'. . . . I never expected this—your mother never told me. . . . I'm sorry . . . God knows, I'm sorry for you, Mary.

MARY. Let us say no more, Jerry; I don't blame you for thinkin' it's terrible. . . . I suppose it is. . . . Everybody'll think the same . . . it's only as I expected—your humanity is just as narrow as the humanity of the others.

JERRY (*half-way to door R.*). I'm sorry, all the same. . . . I shouldn't have troubled you . . . I wouldn't had I known. . . .

(*He crosses on to door R.*)

If I can ever do anything for you . . . Mary . . . I will.

(*He pauses for a few moments at door R., then goes quietly out. Another short pause, and JOHNNY returns slowly from room L., comes to fireplace, leans his arm on mantelpiece, and looks down at MARY. MARY sinks down into chair again.*)

JOHNNY (*inquiringly*). Is he gone?

MARY (*tonelessly*). Yes.

(*The two furniture-removal men re-enter by door R. Each takes a chair.*)

FIRST MAN (*apologetically*). Sorry, Miss, but we have to live as well as the next man.

(They carry out the table.)

JOHNNY. Isn't this terrible? I suppose you told him everything. Couldn't you have waited for a few days. . . . He'd have stopped the taking of the things, if you'd kept your mouth shut. Are you burning to tell everyone of the shame you've brought on us?

MARY (*in agony*). Oh, this is unbearable!

(She swiftly crosses to door R., and goes out. The two furniture-removal men re-enter door R.)

FIRST MAN. We'll take the sofa, now.

(They go to the sofa; the Votive Light flickers for a moment, and then goes out.)

JOHNNY (*glancing up at the light*). Mother of God, the light's gone out!

FIRST MAN (*startled*). You put the wind up me, the way you bawled that time.

(He goes over to fireplace, peers down into the red bowl.)

The oil's all gone, that's all.

(He goes back to help other man with sofa; JOHNNY gives an agonizing cry.)

JOHNNY. Mother of God, there's a shot I'm afther getting!
(The FIRST MAN goes over towards JOHNNY, and looks at him anxiously.)

FIRST MAN. What's wrong with you, man—is it a fit you're afther takin'?

JOHNNY (*with a wail*). I'm afther feelin' a pain in me breast, like the tearin' by of a bullet.

FIRST MAN (*turning to his mate*). That chap's goin' mad—it's a wondher they'd leave a chap like that here be himself.

(Door R. suddenly flies open, and the two IRREGULARS enter swiftly. They carry revolvers in their hands. One crosses swiftly to JOHNNY; the other, standing in front of the two furniture men, covers them with his gun. They put their hands above their heads.)

FIRST IRREGULAR (*to the furniture-removal men, quietly, quickly, and decisively*). Who are you—what are yous doin' here—quick!

FIRST FURNITURE-REMOVAL MAN (*in fear, answering rapidly*). Removin' furniture that's not paid for.

IRREGULAR. Get over to the other end of room; turn faces to wall, an' keep your hands up—quick!

(*The two furniture-removal men turn, with hands over head, walk to end of room c. back, and, with faces to wall, stand there with hands over heads. The FIRST IRREGULAR then goes over to other IRREGULAR, who is standing over JOHNNY at fireplace.*)

SECOND IRREGULAR (*to JOHNNY*). Come on, Shean Boyle, you're wanted; some of us have a word to say to you.

JOHNNY (*plaintively*). I'm sick; I can't; what do you want with me?

SECOND IRREGULAR (*catching one of JOHNNY's arms*). Come on, come on; we've a distance to go, an' we haven't much time—come on.

JOHNNY (*with pathetic appeal*). I'm an oul' comrade—yous wouldn't shoot an oul' comrade.

SECOND IRREGULAR. Poor Tancred was an oul' comrade o' yours, but you didn't think o' that when you gave him away to the gang that sent him to his grave. But we've no time to waste; come on—here, Dermot, ketch his arm.

(*The IRREGULARS pull JOHNNY from chair, and drag him across stage to front c. He feebly resists them.*)

FIRST IRREGULAR (*suddenly to JOHNNY*). Have you your beads?

JOHNNY (*in a sweat of fear*). Me beads! Why do you ass me that, why do you ass me that?

SECOND IRREGULAR. Go on, go on, march!

JOHNNY. Are yous goin' to do in a comrade—look at me arm, I lost it for Ireland.

SECOND IRREGULAR. Commandant Tancred lost his life for Ireland.

JOHNNY (*praying as he is dragged along*). Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on me! Mother o' God, pray for me—be with me now in the agonies o' death! . . . Hail, Mary, full o' grace . . . the Lord is . . . with Thee.

(*They drag out JOHNNY BOYLE, door R., and the CURTAIN falls.*

When it rises again most of the furniture is gone. MARY and MRS. BOYLE, one on each side, are sitting in a darkened room, by the fire, on two boxes, for all chairs are gone; it is an hour later.)

MRS. BOYLE. I'll not wait much longer . . . what did they bring him away in the mothor for? Nugent says he thinks they had guns . . . is me throubles never goin' to be over? . . . If anything ud happen to poor Johnny, I think I'd lose me mind. (*Decisively.*) I'll go to the Police Station, surely they ought to be able to do somethin'.

(*MRS. BOYLE goes over to alcove, back L., and takes her hat from the bed, and puts it on. Outside of door R., voices are heard speaking.*)

Whisht, is that something? Maybe, it's your father, though when I left him in Foley's he was hardly able to lift his head. Whisht!

(A knock at the door R., and the voice of MRS. MADIGAN speaking very softly outside.)

MRS. MADIGAN. Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Boyle.

(MRS. BOYLE from alcove, crosses down to door R., opens it, and MRS. MADIGAN comes in. She goes over to MRS. BOYLE with an air of deep sympathy. They stand R.C., MRS. MADIGAN on MRS. BOYLE'S R. MARY turns round to listen, but still sits on box by the fire.)

Oh, Mrs. Boyle, God an' His Blessed Mother be with you this night!

MRS. BOYLE (calmly). What is it, Mrs. Madigan? It's Johnny—something about Johnny.

MRS. MADIGAN. God send it's not, God send it's not Johnny!

MRS. BOYLE. Don't keep me waitin', Mrs. Madigan; I've gone through so much lately that I feel able for anything.

MRS. MADIGAN. Two polismen below wantin' you.

MRS. BOYLE (surprised). Wantin' me; an' why do they want me?

MRS. MADIGAN. Some poor fella's been found, an' they think it's . . . it's . . .

MRS. BOYLE (with grief). Johnny, Johnny!

MARY (rushing from her place to MRS. BOYLE and putting arms round her). Oh, mother, mother, me poor, darlin' mother.

MRS. BOYLE. Hush, hush, darlin'; you'll shortly have your own throuble to bear. (To MRS. MADIGAN.) An' why do the polis think it's Johnny, Mrs. Madigan?

MRS. MADIGAN. Because one o' the doctors knew him when he was attendin' with his poor arm.

MRS. BOYLE. Oh, it's throe, then; it's Johnny, it's me son, me own son!

MARY (wildly). Oh, it's throe, it's throe what Jerry Devine says—there isn't a God, there isn't a God; if there was He wouldn't let these things happen!

MRS. BOYLE (soothingly). Mary, Mary, you mustn't say them things. We'll want all the help we can get from God an' His Blessed Mother now! These things have nothin' to do with the Will o' God. Ah, what can God do agen the stupidity o' men!

MRS. MADIGAN. The polis want you to go with them to the hospital to see the poor body—they're waitin' below.

MRS. BOYLE. We'll go. Come, Mary, an' we'll never come back here agen. Let your father furrage for himself now; I've done all I could an' it was all no use—he'll be hopeless till the end of his days. I've got a little room in me sisher's where we'll stop till your throuble is over, an' then we'll work together for the sake of the baby.

MARY. My poor little child that'll have no father!

MRS. BOYLE. It'll have what's far better—it'll have two mothers.

(MRS. BOYLE releases herself gently from MARY, goes back to alcove, takes her coat from bed, and puts it on her. MRS. MADIGAN goes to MARY, and puts an arm round her. A rough voice is heard shouting from outside door R.)

VOICE (outside door R.). Are yous goin' to keep us waitin' for yous all night?

(MRS. MADIGAN runs to door R., opens it, and shouts out.)

MRS. MADIGAN. Take your hour, there, take your hour! If yous are in such a hurry, skip off, then, for nobody wants you here—if they did yous wouldn't be found. For you're the same as yous were under the British Government—never where yous are wanted! As far as I can see, the Polis as Polis, in this city, is Null an' Void!

MRS. BOYLE. We'll go, Mary, we'll go; you to see your poor dead brother, an' me to see me poor dead son!

MARY. I dhread it, mother, I dhread it!

(MRS. MADIGAN goes back to MARY, and again puts a sheltering arm round her. They stand a little in from door R. MRS. BOYLE comes slowly down to centre of stage, and stands there.)

MRS. BOYLE. I forgot, Mary, I forgot; your poor oul' selfish mother was only thinkin' of herself. No, no, you mustn't come—it wouldn't be good for you. You go on to me sither's an' I'll face th' ordeal meself. Maybe I didn't feel sorry enough for Mrs. Tancred when her poor son was found as Johnny's been found now—because he was a Die-hard! (*With deep feeling.*) Ah, why didn't I remember that then he wasn't a Die-hard or a Stater, but only a poor dead son! It's well I remember all that she said—an' it's my turn to say it now: What was the pain I suffered, Johnny, bringin' you into the world to carry you to your cradle to the pains I'll suffer carryin' you out o' the world to bring you to your grave! Mother o' God, Mother o' God, have pity on us all! Blessed Virgin, where were you when me darlin' son was riddled with bullets, when me darlin' son was riddled with bullets? Sacred Heart o' Jesus, take away our hearts o' stone, and give us hearts o' flesh! Take away this murderin' hate, an' give us Thine own eternal love!

(MRS. BOYLE crosses by in front of MRS. MADIGAN and MARY, and goes slowly out by door R., followed slowly by MRS. MADIGAN and MARY. There is a pause, then the sound of shuffling steps are heard outside door R. The door opens and BOYLE, very drunk, enters, and shuffles across to C. He stands there for a few moments.)

Then JOXER, as drunk as BOYLE, appears at door, and supports himself against one side of it.)

BOYLE. I'm able to go no farther. . . . Two polis, ey? . . . what were they doin' here, I wondher? . . . Up to no good, anyhow . . . an' Juno an' that lovely daughter o' mine with them. *(Taking a sixpence from his pocket and looking at it.)* Wan single, solithary tanner left out of all I borreyed. . . . *(He lets it fall.)* The last o' the Mohicans. . . . The blinds is down, Joxer, the blinds is down!

JOXER *(walking unsteadily across the room, and anchoring at the bed)*. Put all . . . your throubles . . . in your oul' kit bag . . . an' smile . . . smile . . . smile!

(BOYLE staggers over to the L., and swayingly sits down on a box above fireplace.)

BOYLE. The counthry'll have to steady itself . . . it's goin' . . . to hell. . . . Where'r all . . . the chairs . . . gone to . . . steady itself, Joxer. *(In a hazy way, notices chairs are gone.)* Chairs'll . . . have to . . . steady themselves. . . . No matther . . . what anyone may . . . say. . . . Irelan' sober . . . is Irelan' . . . free.

JOXER *(stretching himself on the bed)*. Chains . . . an' . . . slaveree . . . that's a darlin' motto . . . a daaarin' . . . motto!

BOYLE. If th' worst comes . . . to th' worse . . . I can join a . . . flyin' . . . column. . . . I done . . . me bit . . . in Easter Week . . . had no business . . . to . . . be . . . there . . . but Captain Boyle's Captain Boyle!

JOXER. Breathes there a man with soul . . . so . . . de . . . ad . . . this . . . me . . . o . . . wn, me nat . . . ive l . . . an'!

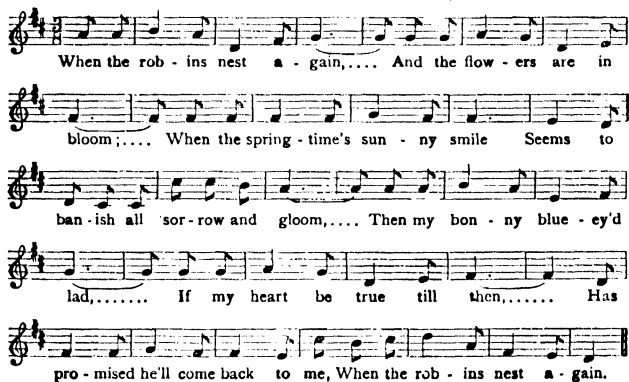
BOYLE *(subsiding into a sitting posture on the floor, stretching out arms)*. Commandant Kelly died . . . in them . . . arms . . . Joxer. . . . Tell me Volunteer Butties . . . says he . . . that . . . I died for . . . Irelan'!

JOXER. D'jever rade Willie . . . Reilly . . . an' his . . . own . . . Colleen . . . Bawn? It's a darlin' story, a daaarin' story!

BOYLE. I'm telling you . . . Joxer . . . th' whole worl's . . . in a terr . . . ible state o' . . . chassis!

CURTAIN.

BOYLE'S song, as he cooks breakfast.



When the rob - ins nest a - gain,.... And the flow - ers are in
 bloom;.... When the spring - time's sun - ny smile Seems to
 ban - ish all sor - row and gloom,.... Then my bon - ny blue - ey'd
 lad,..... If my heart be true till then,..... Has
 pro - mised he'll come back to me, When the rob - ins nest a - gain.

Sung by BOYLE, end of Act I.



O my dar - ling Ju - no, I will be true to thee; My
 own, my dar - ling Ju - no, You're all the world to me.

PROPERTY AND FURNITURE PLOT

ACT I

Dresser with Delft.
Blue and white coloured chalk statue of Blessed Virgin.
Small crimson bowl for votive light.
Kitchen table and two or three kitchen chairs.
An old armchair.
Teapot, frying-pan, cups and saucers, plates.
Small mirror.
Long-handled shovel.
Newspaper.
Three books.
Fillet of ribbon for MARY.
Document as Will for BENTHAM.
Parcel of sausages for MRS. BOYLE.
Old lace curtains for window, back.

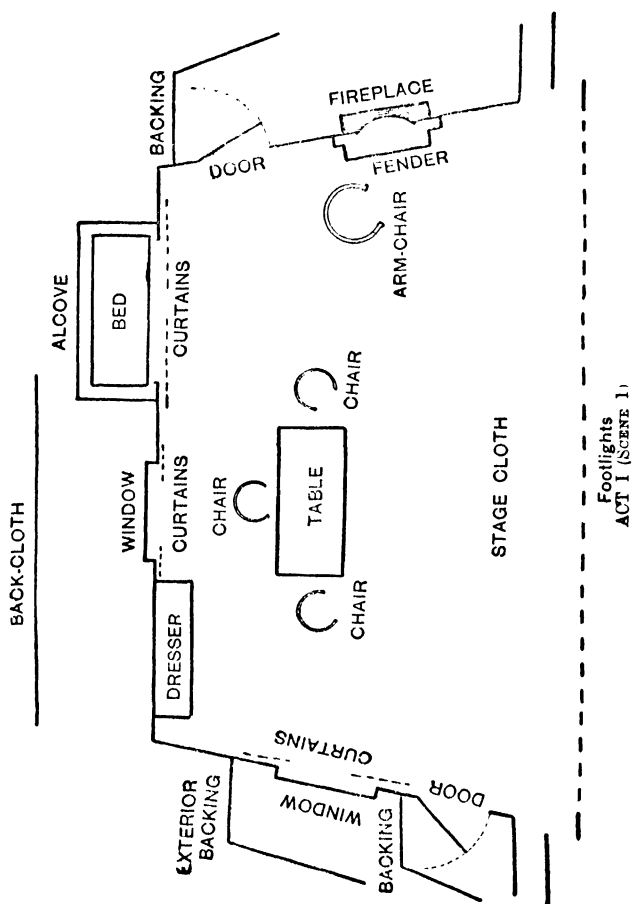
ACT II

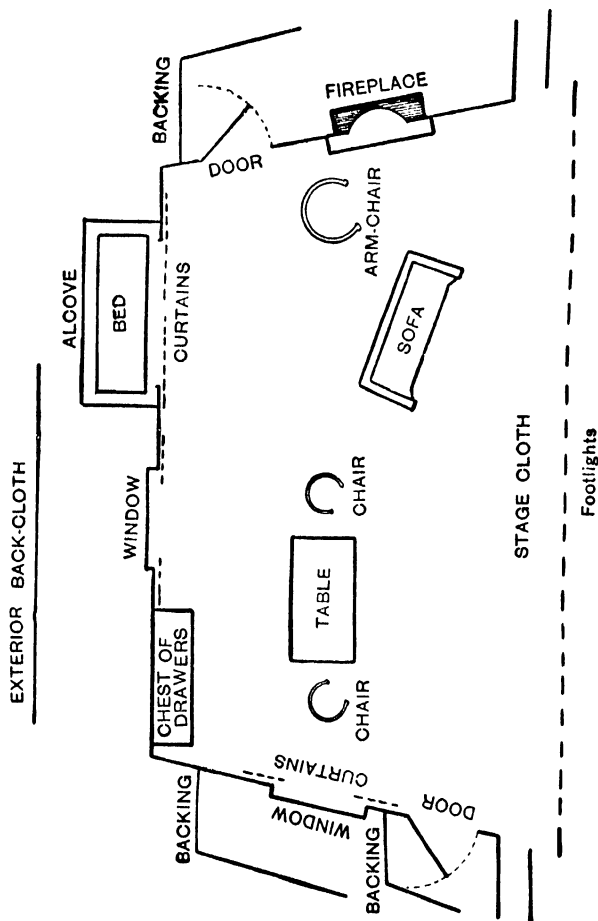
Gaudily upholstered couch or sofa.
Three chairs upholstered in the same way.
Highly polished chest of drawers.
China ware for tea on chest of drawers.
Bottle of whisky.
Several bottles of stout.
A cake, or several small ones.
Big gaudy vase.
Attaché-case, in which are writing materials.
Fountain pen for BOYLE.
Gramophone with some records.
Bunch of artificial flowers for vase.
Money in notes for JOXER.
Silver coins for BOYLE.
Coloured Christmas paper chains to hang under ceiling.
Red bowl for light, as in Act I.
A picture.

ACT III

Same as Act I, with *Catholic Herald* or *Catholic Fireside*.
Two revolvers for IRREGULARS.
Silver coin, like a sixpence, for BOYLE.
Two old boxes.
Lamp.
Suit of clothes for "NEEDLE" NUGENT.
Bottle of liniment.
Two newspapers.

PROPERTY AND FURNITURE PLOT.





LIGHTING PLOT

ACT I

Full white No. 1 batten and floats.
White strip at door, R.
Two amber strips at door, L.
Two amber strips at window, back.
Two white floods on window, R.
Fire lit and hot plate for cooking sausage.

ACT II

Same as Act I, except hot plate, which is off.

ACT III

Open to floats and No. 1 batten checked to three-fourths, change white floods on window, R., to amber. Votive lamp lit, and frosted amber baby spot on it.
Knock off strip on door, R.
Further check to one-half starting on NUGENT's exit with suit; have it completed before JUNO's entrance.

ACT III

SCENE 2

Same as above, except change amber floods on window R., to blue, and fire out.

